

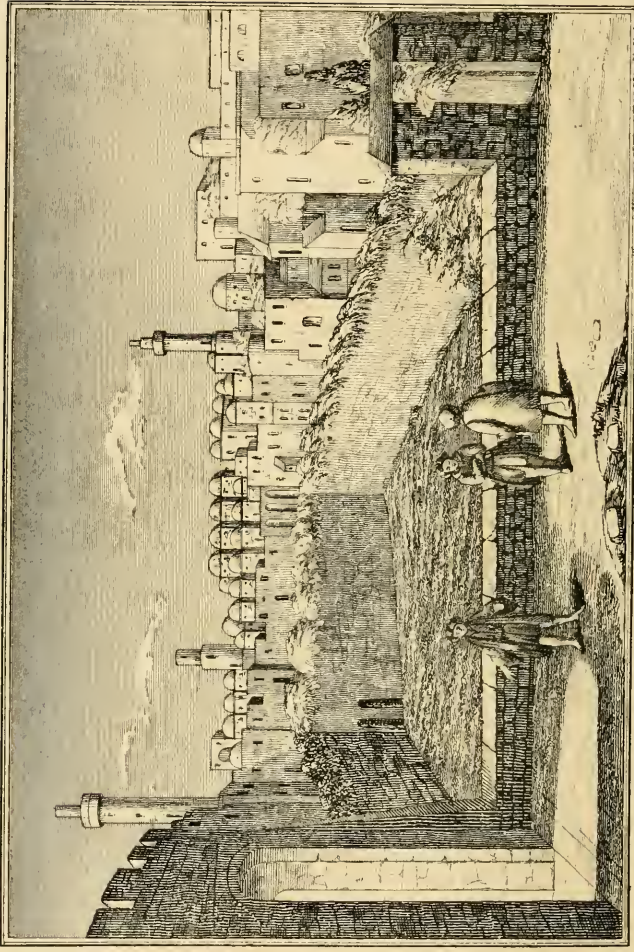




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POOL OF BETTESIDA,



SACRED FOUNTAINS:

OR

Observations Historical and Practical,

ON THE

STREAMS, LAKES AND FOUNTAINS

OF THE

HOLY LAND.

BY REV. DAVID WILSON,

OF PHILADELPHIA.

THIRD EDITION.

JNO. T. SHRYOCK, PITTSBURGH:
WESTERN PUBLISHER.
1859.

ENTERED, ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1853,

By DAVID WILSON,

IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT, FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT
OF PENNSYLVANIA.

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P R E F A C E.

The following sketches were written several years ago, in connection with the ordinary duties of the Pastor. They were prepared solely with a view of publication in some of the religious newspapers. Accordingly a few of these papers appeared in several journals in the Middle and Southern States. It was suggested to the author, at the time, to publish the whole series in book form. Various reasons, not necessary to name, prevented a compliance with these kind requests.

In the meantime, an American publisher announced a British work, of an almost synonymous title, written fifteen months after several of these articles were made public. An examination of the book has shown that they are not at all similar, and that the author has failed to do what I desired to accomplish. Without saying aught in disparagement of Mr. Grosse's volume, it will be proper to state that his work is much more on the order of a narrative, and contains sketches of but a few of these Pools and Fountains.

Had we deferred the preparation of the work, we would probably have written it in a slightly different style; it might not have been prepared more carefully and acceptably. We designed simply to suggest themes for profitable pious reflection. To the youth of our Churches and Sabbath Schools, whose studies embrace the field of Sacred Geography and History, we would commend this volume. The author is quite conscious that whatever interest it may possess, is in part attributable to his Sabbath School studies and researches.

D. W.

ABANA—A RIVER.

Among the first if not the most important of those streams which claim the attention of the Biblical student, is that whose name is placed at the head of this page. Issuing from the base of Mount Hermon, or the beautiful range of Anti-Libanus, it flows around the suburbs of Damascus, coursing its way through beautiful vales, until its waters are lost in the sands of the desert, some four or five leagues to the North East of the city. Known to the ancient Greeks, by the name of Chrysorrhoas; it has now, however, lost its scriptural and classic designation, and is only known by the name of Barrady. Like many of the rivers and pools of Scripture history, it receives its distinction from its historical reminiscences, and from the famed Damascus, whose gardens and reservoirs are supplied from its pure and abundant waters. Damascus and Abana, are one and inseparable. Like the life current, which gushing from the heart to the extremities, until the pulse beats strong, indicative of health and vigor, preparing us for active, mental and physical exertion; so this river sending its limpid and health-sustaining

current through the reservoirs of the city, imparts energy, activity and importance to the political and commercial interests of the ancient capital of Samaria. The river and not the city is the probable object of interest and safety, which even now, induces the Mohammedan Pilgrims, to the number of fifty thousand, to congregate from the northern portions of Asia, preparatory to their journey to the tomb of the Prophet; of the engrossing trade carried on in the goods and riches of India, received through the port of Mecca. Damascus thus becomes the chief northern depot. This in fact, is now the great mart of trade, which has existed from the earliest ages, and the which channel of communication, partly overland, and partly by the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea, was anciently through the cities of Babylon, Palmyra, Tyre, Sidon, Alexandria, and even Jerusalem. The source of health, wealth and beauty, we need not be surprised in being informed that the city thus beautifully supplied with water, should have continued amid surrounding desolation, a place of considerable importance. It is a somewhat singular and striking coincidence, that this city, so universally famed for its wealth and mercantile power, should be noted as the birth place of the *steward* of Abraham, (Gen. 15: 2,) so that the management and

acquisition of property, appears inseparably associated with its earliest history, Remarkable for being the only city of equal antiquity, which sustains to the present day, a high degree of eminence; the Turks and Arabs, from *this* circumstance, believe it to have been the original Paradise, and that it has not its equal on earth.

Environed and fertilized by the bright liquid waters of the Abana, which winding amid groves of dates and palm, reflects the bright image of peerless stars. Tradition asserts, that Mahomet coming in sight of the city, was so charmed with the exceeding beauty and richness of the place, that he resolved not to enter it, fearing he should be tempted to resign the Heavenly Paradise to which he aspired, for the Paradise of earth which he saw before him. The Syrian kingdom of Damascus, is supposed to have originated during the reign of David. It continued to be of much importance, until subject to Tiglath—Pileser, the Assyrian King, who took it and killed Rezin the King, about 740 years before Christ. One of the most important and interesting circumstances in connection with this beautiful river, is the cleansing of Naaman, "captain of the hosts" of one of the kings of the latter empire. It appears that a little Jewish maid, taken by some predatory

band from her native country, had been sold into the family of this distinguished officer. Having been instructed as was the duty of her parents (Deuteronomy 28 ; 6,) in the character and requirements of the ceremonial law, she is supposed to have been conversant with its regulations concerning the plague of leprosy. Hearing that her master was the victim of this foul (and as far as human instrumentality was efficient) incurable malady, she ventured to suggest to her mistress, an application to the Prophet in Samaria, with whose name and fame she was acquainted. This intelligence, communicated by her mistress to Naaman was made known to the king, who wishing to preserve the life of his faithful General, sat him down, and addressed a letter, to be carried by Naaman, to the king of Israel. On a bright and beautiful morning, arranged in his military dress, and accompanied by his servants, with costly presents for the king, Naaman's chariot rolled through the streets to the gates of the city, and drove beneath the dripping reservoirs, filled with water from the ever-rolling and beautiful Abana. Filled with thoughts, whilst on his journey, of the courteous manner, in which he should be received, and his presents accepted by the King of Israel, imagine his surprise, when, having read the letter, the king

refused him audience, thinking in view of the impossibility of his performing the cure, that the whole affair was intended as a pretext for a quarrel. The Prophet Elisha hearing of the event, sent and requested Naaman to come to him, that he "might know there was a Prophet in Israel." As yet unhumbled, Naaman's Chariot rolled to the door of the Prophet, who, without coming down, directed him to "go and wash in Jordan seven times," and he should be healed. Incensed at the suspicions of the king, and the seeming discourteous manner in which he had been treated by the Prophet, he became angry, and went away, saying, "Behold I thought he would surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. *Are not Abana and Pharpar rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?*"

Alas for human pride! Alas for human prejudice! Abana might be a beautiful river, and wind round a magnificent city, the seat of wealth and power. It might pour its silver current into a thousand artificial ducts until filled, its surplus waters run down in a thousand crystal streams, gleaming like icicles in the sun, and yet it might not recover the leper.

Jordan was the stream ; the appointed means of restoration, and declared in this instance to be of more value, than "all the waters of Damascus." The captain was finally prevailed upon, by the entreaty of his servant, to test the remedy, when according to the word of the Prophet, he was healed ; carrying with him the wholesome instruction of the seer, he returned changed in mind, and healed in body.

Often, doubtless, after this important event, as he drank the waters of Abana, from the cisterns in the city ; or drove his chariot along the banks of the ever-gliding river, beneath the spreading branches of the rustling Palm, he would recur to that moment of folly, when his pride and inordinate love of the beautiful river rolling before his vision, had well nigh caused him to neglect the only available means of restoration. We will not stop to describe at length the other important and Scriptural events, which, though not relating to the river, are yet connected with the city of Damascus. About half a mile distant, and as is supposed by some, near the Abana, is shown the place of Saint Paul's vision and miraculous conversion. The street called "*straight*," yet exists, (Acts, 9 ; 11,) whilst the place where Paul was restored (Acts 9 : 17) to sight, and was afterwards let down (Acts 9 : 25,) in a basket, together

with the house of Judas, with whom St. Paul lodged; and the house and tomb of Annanias are yet shown.

A medal has been recently shown, representing Damascus, on the upper part of which is a temple, and below a grotto, in which a female figure, holding in her right hand ears of corn, and in her left a cornucopia, resting on an urn, from which *flows a stream of water*.

So it would appear that Abana, made sacred from its association with Bible history, can never be forgotten.

BETHESDA—A POOL.

AMONG the most remarkable antiquities yet shown in Jerusalem, and its neighborhood, is the Pool of Bethesda. In such condition as yet to be recognized by modern travellers as the place where one of Christ's miracles was performed, it continues to be an object of interest to the oriental student. Unimportant as some may suppose its existence to be, it was regarded by all pious Jews as a token of God's good will, and an indication that, though as a nation they had been long without prophets, and miracles, and had lost their independence, he had not cast them off. The history of this noted pool is involved in considerable obscurity. According to a conjecture of Dr. Lightfoot, it is supposed to be the same with the upper pool, (Isa, vii: 3:) and the *old pool*, mentioned, (Isa. xxii: 11:) and which were used for washing from ceremonial pollutions. That which most concerns us, however, is the history of its sanative properties, which distinguishes it as a place of interest in Scripture history. Mineral and medicinal waters, which contribute so much in our own day to the health and happiness of mankind, viewed as a provision of God's bounty, (Rev. xiv: 7:) are

special objects of thankfulness. And from the character of those who, for years together, lay beneath the shade of the porticos which surrounded the pool, we are assured it was an object of affectionate regard to the multitude of impotent folk, who waited there continually for the troubling of the waters. We may readily suppose, that its being frequented by the poor and diseased, was but the natural appreciation of its name and virtue, Bethesda, *house of mercy*. What place so befitting the resort of the poor and diseased? Destitute of the means of support, and afflicted with incurable maladies, they came to this sacred fountain, in dependence on Him, from whom alone, through the instrumentality of these waters, they hoped for restoration. We will not stop to examine the unnatural supposition, that the virtue of the water was owing to a mineral property, or had been communicated by the blood of the sacrifices, which is entirely refuted by the scriptural account of the cures performed through its agency. Among the most remarkable circumstances in the history furnished by St. John, is the fact, that there were periodical visits made to its waters "by an angel of the Lord," after which the person who first stepped in, was made whole, of "whatsoever diseases he had." Showing that the

healing property of the water was not natural, but one with which it was miraculously endowed. Another peculiarity is, that while natural and artificial baths are, in many cases, more hurtful than useful, this was a specific in every malady. The celebrated traveller, Maundrel, observes—"That which they now call the pool of Bethesda, is about one hundred and twenty paces long, and forty broad, and at least eight deep, but destitute of water. At its west end are some old arches, which were shown as the remains of the five porches, three of which only remain." Those who have recently visited it, accord in the main, with the description given by Mr. Maundrel. There is no spot, perhaps, near or in the city of Jerusalem, if we except Mount Calvary, and the vale of Gethsemane, possessing more interest.

A memorial of God's remembrance of his people, a type of the Messiah, of the "fountain opened" for sin and uncleanness, and the place of one of his most notable miracles, it is at once an object of enthusiastic regard. Our Savior, coming up to the feast of the Passover, observed by his prescient eye, one among the multitude of diseased, who had an "infirmity thirty and eight years," and being tenderly inquisitive concerning the desires of those who are in affliction, he said to this peculiar object of

charity, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Upon which the sick man, not thinking of any other means of restoration, than the pool, raised his eyes to the face of Jesus, and imploringly exclaimed—"Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool." No one is interested for me; no friend is near at the "troubling of the waters," to aid me in availing myself of its curative properties. How eloquent that appeal? An appeal which the Son of God, the *friend* of sinners, could not withstand. Whereupon, surrounded by persons set to watch his conduct, yet standing in the dignified majesty of his God-head power, he exclaims, in a voice of mingled majesty and compassion—"Rise, take up thy bed and walk." Immediately feeling the movings of new-born energy, he arose with joyful surprise, not dreading who blamed or threatened him, and employed his restored powers in the work of magnifying the ability of the Savior.

It was the Sabbath morn. No sound was heard in or around the temple, but the slow, measured tread of the pilgrims coming up to the morning service. The sun, just risen o'er the summit of Olivet, was pouring the first flood of rays on the burnished roof of the temple, until the atmosphere, above and around, was illumed with the reflected glory. All nature was surpassingly lovely: and to the Israelite,

just arrived from the more remote portions of the goodly land, Jerusalem, so sacred and beautiful, appeared then his chief joy. What feelings of gratitude must that Jew have felt, who in the midst of such glory had just been bidden "to walk," and to whom no place in Jerusalem had any special interest, for "thirty and eight years," save the pool of Bethesda! We will not stop to notice the enmity of the Jews, aroused against Jesus, in consequence of performing the miracle, nor remark concerning their silly and hypocritical zeal for the sanctity of the Sabbath; nor comment upon the unreasonableness of objecting to Christ, at having relieved the public of the poor man's support. We may observe, however, the strange coincidence, that this pool of mercy should be near the *sheep* market. May we not venture to conjecture, that there was something symbolic in this? Christ himself, the true "Lamb" of God, may have been signified by this. He too was *near* the pool when the poor man was restored. This pool is the supposed type of the Savior and our redemption: and the waters by which the pool was filled, signified the kingdom of David, and of Christ, his "Greater Son," and most fitly represents the sovereign virtue of his blood. (Isa. viii: 6.) What important practical admonitions are furnished by the

history of this miracle? How many reflections press upon the mind, as suitable to be recorded? "The power of miracles *succeeds* when the power of nature succumbs." The angel *stirred* the water, but left the diseased to place themselves in the pool. So the same Deity, who would have us healed of our spiritual maladies, has put virtue into the Scriptures and ordinances; but if we do not employ them at the right *time*, and in the right *way*, they will not avail in our behalf. If we earnestly desire, we shall be healed. We do not know accurately, when this extraordinary virtue was communicated to the waters of Bethesda; or when it ceased. But we do know that the fact of its location near the temple, and the history of the miracle, is a standing monument to the memory of Him who is the "fountain of life;" the which fountain, as was the water of Bethesda, shall be ever effectual in the cure of all spiritual maladies.

BERED, OR THE WELL OF LAHAI-ROI.

NOT far from the supposed site of the ancient city of Gaza, in a most wilderness country, the traveller is shown the well of Lahai-roi, or *fountain of Him that lives and sees me*. Few, perhaps none, of the ancient historical portions of the Bible possess greater interest than the story of Hagar and Ishmael. Associated with the venerable character and history of the "Father of the faithful," the narrative of their singular and providential banishment from his family, will stand through unnumbered ages, a monument to the truthfulness of the Mosaic record.

How often, in our youthful fancies, have we wandered back through the lapse of centuries, to the wilderness of Shur, to the spot where the infant Ishmael lay; and seating ourselves on the crisped leaves beside him, have looked on his sorrowful countenance, whilst the silent, involuntary tear coursed its way through the half-opened eyelid, and dropped on the ground? And then, as our heart beat responsive to his suppressed breathing, have

felt the blood congeal in our veins, as the wail of Hagar's sorrow, from the thicket beyond, sounded loud and piercing on the ear; when looking above and around, we have pictured in the hazy atmosphere, the burnished form of the celestial messenger, who, pointing the anxious eye of Hagar to the bubbling fountain, announced promises of blessing and protection!

To the contemplative mind there is much to interest the feelings and excite the curiosity, in the account furnished of the rearing and banishment of Ishmael from his father's house, and the scenes and associations of his boyhood pastimes. We all know how strong and indissoluble are the associations and ties of kindred, and with what tenacity we cling to the home of our youth, and the place of the heart's best and purest affections. How sweet, when retired to the old family mansion, between whose sloping wall of stone clumps of boxwood, bramble, and tufts of moss spring up, to spend hours with parents, brothers and sisters, in the solitude and silence of the winter night, in conversing, without witnesses, and at our pleasure, of the most sweet emotions of our own souls! Every object, whether artificial or natural, within sight of our dwellings, being associated with our infant days, becomes an object of

interest and pleasure. The mountain summit, sparkling in the distance, on the verge of the horizon, or the sky, whose warmth and serenity we have often breathed, and whose bright image we have viewed, as mirrored on the smooth surface of the stream which winds around through our home meadows, are all sacred. How the thought of parting forever from these fond scenes, oppresses the heart! and despite, perhaps, of a pre-conceived determination, makes us desire to repose in death beneath these consecrated shades! If it be hard thus voluntarily to leave the place of our birth, and to sever forever the strongest and most endearing relationships, how, think you, should we feel if driven away, and that too by direction of a *father* whom we have tenderly loved, and to whom we look for counsel and support? This was Ishmael's condition. Not being the "child of promise," at the birth of Isaac, the jealousy and contention of the respective mothers, Hagar and Sarah, grew so violent as to pain the heart of the venerable father, and even to call for divine interposition. Often, doubtless, until this ensued, the heart of this faithful man was much distressed at these unpleasant altercations. It being revealed to Abraham that Ishmael should become the father of a great nation; that he should be a wild man, and that his

hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against him; he no longer hesitated, but sent them away into the wilderness. This was a great grief; but he had learned what God required, he would give strength to perform. Often, methinks, after the banishment of his wife and son, would Abraham retire to his humble tent, and lay him down at night, with thoughts of sadness; when nerving himself for the trial, he would brush away the silent tear, and recount in consolation the promises; hearing all the time the breathings of the promised child and mother, until growing more subdued and low, they died away in vague and monotonous murmurs. At the request of Sarah, Abraham had taken the mother of Ishmael as his wife. He had long wished and prayed for a son who should inherit his property, bear his name, and transmit it to posterity, until it had become the absorbing thought of his life. When, therefore, Isaac, the child of promise, was born, he became the single link on which everything rested, and in whom was garnered all the love and hopes of his noble, faithful heart. Still he loved Ishmael, and sorrowed at parting forever from the child of his early memories. But the command to banish them was given; and in this instance, the faithful performance of the require-

ment, and the perpetuation of domestic tranquility, was more important than to preserve an unbroken family, in which strife only could exist.

Hagar and Ishmael, "on whose pure spirit young hopes lay like morning dew-drops, to whom life was fresh, joyous and radiant," were banished from that domestic circle, which, but for her insubordination, would have reflected every trait of moral excellence and beauty. Ishmael, though expatriated from his father's family, did not resent the injury; but quietly relinquishing home and wealth to Isaac, united with him, at their father's death, in performing the rights of sepulture. This shows, though a wild man, and the father of the ever unconquerable Arab, we have no authority for saying a father's prayers and instructions were lost upon him.

Many reflections occur on this interesting story. Our limits will admit but one or two. Faith, religion is necessary to the regulation of every family, to aid in making those sacrifices of feeling to duty, which are ever occurring. Domestic felicity is paramount to every sacrifice made in its attainment. Happy is he on whom is conferred the blessing of having sprung from a good and pious family. This is the chief blessing of his lot. The future fate of the child depends upon the home in which he is born.

Our mother's look is a portion of the soul, which is nourished, and grows, above all, by the impressions which are left on our memory. Who among us, then, on seeing that look, even in a dream, does not feel a something descending on his soul, which soothes its trouble, and diffuses serenity around it? Long as the deeds and acts of Abraham shall be told, shall the memory of the well Bcred, and of Hagar and Ishmael never be forgotten.

BEERSHEBA—A WELL.

ON the southern extremity of Canaan, and within the place marked on the map, as appportioned to the tribe of Simeon, is shown the place where the city of Berzinnia, or Bessabe, once stood. To the eye of the traveller unlearned in the sacred history of Judea, there is not much of interest in the spot, save the somewhat wild and strangely picturesque scenery. One, however, to whom the quiver of a leaf, the rock all overgrown with moss, or the trunk of an old tree, blackened by the storms of ages, furnishes matter of reflection, will not be uninterested as his footsteps linger around this consecrated place. If the history of Abraham, be but the embryo history of a nation, we may “sojourn” with him, and in imagination, let down our pitchers to draw from the crystal surface of *the well of the oath*, the natural emblem of truth, equity and mercy. We need not to have been thus particular in soliciting the readers attention, if our excursion led us to visit some sublime or graceful object, such as a beautiful sheet of water dashing down in cascades, whilst all around

the mountain summit, gleaming in the last rays of lovely sunset, are groped clouds of unusual shape and color. Dazzled with the spray and foam, we would scarce need to be directed to take advantage of the grandeur and novelty of the impression in aiding us to raise our souls to the author of all these wonders; and to place us in communication with Him. And yet, what object within the range of vision is better calculated to raise our thoughts, than a fellow mortal in converse with Jehovah. When the shadow of the mountain, stealing o'er the plain, until our dwelling be already wrapped in the twilight of the closing day; when all the wandering aspirations and feelings of the day are turned inward, and the thoughts called home; the natural language of the heart is to hold communion with Him who forms our surest solace and support.

And yet an oath is a prayer, a direct appeal to God, before whom, as knowing our inmost thoughts, without mental reservation, or for the sake of personal friendship or advantage, or from fear of personal inconvenience, we promise to speak or perform that which the contracting party has a right to expect. If prayer "ardent opens heaven" the ear and presence of Deity are to be distinctly acknowledged on so important an occasion. If truth as an oath

for "affirmation" is usually an "end of all strife;" so it may be considered, whenever assumed, that the uplifted hand, the kissing of a Bible, or as in this instance, the naming of a fountain of water, is a sublime commentary on the Divine omniscience. Often, as the firmament rolls out before our vision, with its myriads of stars, have we fancied we could hear the responsive affirmations of Abraham and Abimelech, echoing in deep low murmurs above and around us, resembling the regular ebb and flow of the feelings of the heart, breaking on the shores of life, and sending up their voice to the ears of the Creator. Such were the sounds to which the plants, the leaves, the trees and God listened.

It is recorded of the Pagan nations of antiquity, when they erected a new temple on the site of an old one; they were wont to introduce into the new edifice, a column, if not all the materials of the old one, in order that there might be something ancient and sacred in the new building; and that even the masonry, gross and clumsy as it was, might have its worship for the heart, among the other things with which they decorated the house of their gods.

Without commending this superstition, or referring to human instincts ever the same, if possible, would it not have an important influence, to incase in some

conspicuous portion of the walls of our modern temples of justice, a simple stone from this well, as a memorial of the fidelity, with which Abraham and Abimelech performed the covenant. When from the height of a promontory, we see a vessel glide slowly in the shadow of the shore, we loose our solicitude for the safety of the mariners ; so when friends long estranged, and tossed on the billows of strife and contention, with becalmed feelings, glide smoothly along the shore of reason, from which the soft zephyrs of forbearance and love, steal softly o'er the smooth surface of the once angered billows, we hope that the danger of a second tempest is forever past. So calmly and sweetly did the oath at the *waters* of Beersheba, becalm excited feeling, and induce the servants of the respective parties to confide in the security of this perpetual bond of harmony. How strangely associated are the incidents of life ! With what rapidity alternate seasons of sorrow and joy succeed each other ! Sometimes we lay down to sleep, beneath a sky all clear ; lulled by the sound of the wind through the trees, and the waves on the shore, with the trembling moonbeams playing on our pallet ; when we awake, the sky all smooth and polished as crystal before, is overcast with clouds ! The sacred proverb, that sorrow may continue for

a night, but joy cometh in the morning, seemed in the history of Abraham, about to be reversed. The calm peace felt by the christian, after having discharged his duty, had been realized by this man of God, after the ratification of the covenant at the well of Beersheba; and he might now, judging from the calm of his once agitated bosom, have anticipated a season of repose. As in the natural, so in the moral world; the storm always succeeds the calm, arising in this instance with redoubled fury. While he sojourned at this well, he was commanded to take his only son to the land of Moriah, and offer him for a burnt sacrifice. The Patriarch's fear had come upon him; and he turned to his tent with an unusually dark cloud on his soul. Each successive morning after, his tent disappeared in the distance, until the last object visible, "all broke clear and beautiful, inviting him to stay his progress," and not attempt obedience to that which might have been esteemed a rash command. He who could make and keep his covenant with man, was not the one to lose confidence in the covenant and oath of Jehovah. In leaving the idolatry of his father's house and kindred, the resolution was taken, to keep and obey the Divine commands. Faith triumphed! the gold was tried and found pure, the son too was spared.

When kneeling with the spared "scion," in overwhelming gratitude before the altar of sacrifice, he rejoiced in the inviolate *oath* and promise of his God. Beersheba will exist in history, as an illustration of the case, with which the difficulties of our own and our family's making, may be settled. Though the grove planted by Abraham, and beneath which cooling shade he worshipped, has long since disappeared, the *covenant*, the offering of Isaac, and the well of Beersheba, with the important lessons furnished in their history will be perpetual.

BETHLEHEM—A WELL.

IF there be one city in the Holy Land more endeared to the heart of the christian than any other, that place is Bethlehem; situated on the declivity of a hill, six miles South of Jerusalem; it is chiefly honored in being the birth place of Jesus.

As its next distinction, that which makes the city illustrious, is in being also the birth place of King David, from whom the Saviour descended, according to the flesh. The country around, abundant in grapes, figs and other fruits, furnishes a most interesting and delightful prospect. Here the "youthful shepherd" spent his boyhood days. The recollection of whose joys are so vivid and touching, amid the woes and struggles of decrepitude and age. Often memory calls us back to the fields where we once played, where the waters and trees sparkling and waving before the eye, appear to reproach us for having abandoned what was so peaceful and pure. Our early memories are the most tender and sacred. On them, when old age oppresses us with its cares and sorrows, we dwell with the fondest recollections. As when looking into that newly invented optical in-

strument, every backward turn of the kaliedescope of life, presents objects of more new and singular attraction, until brought back to our most infant joys and recollections. When we turn our contemplations to the history of others, we are still presented with objects of pleasing admonition. Such is especially the case in the study of scripture history. Here history is not a mere register of facts, such as are commonly those of eminent men, but selections of facts, suitableness for purposes of instruction having regulated the choice. Most frequently, those are selected, which symbolically represent something connected with the scheme of redemption; on which account it has found a place in the sacred volume. It is not unusual for the recorded fact to answer both these descriptions; being instructive in itself, and serving also as an emblem of truths, which were then taught only by shadows and types. In the study of our own, and the characters presented in sacred history, we ought to be careful that we content not ourselves with apprehending the facts, but study diligently what lessons they convey. Thus, like dew-drops hanging on the petal of a flower, which are supposed as a focus, in which every ray of the sun is converged, and every tint of color reflected; the record of spiritual truth will furnish material for

instruction, which will give histories the nature of homilies, and show us in the events of an individual's life, prophetic things, in which the whole world has interest. Such is the character of an event which forms the basis of our observations, and associated with the illustrious names and character of the "Shepherd King," has made memorable and sacred the well of Bethlehem. On the west side, and but little distant from the modern village of Bethlehem, is shown the well of David, so called from being supposed to be that, whose waters he so passionately desired, (2 Sam. 23: 15.)

David was a man of war from his youth. Reared in the capacity of a shepherd, and reclining with his flocks beneath a sky ever beautiful, on the sloping hills around the home of his childhood and the city of his fathers, one would suppose he would have a perfect loathing for the scenes and associations of the camp and the field. Strangely in contrast is his eventful history. Chosen by God, after the rejection of Saul, to govern the kingdom of Israel, he was constrained by a singular Providence, to fight both for internal and national supremacy. A man of astonishing courage, when brought before Saul, after relating in a simple and artless manner one of his achievements, he fearlessly assured that

uncircumcised Philistine should be as one of them, seeing he had defied the armies of the living God.

From the whole history, it would appear that he was not only the greatest captain of the age, but had the peculiar faculty of but few eminent Generals, of attaching the hearts of his followers to himself. Distinguished by this kindness of disposition, which is the grand secret in ruling the hearts of men, it is not at all surprising, after an exhibition of such extraordinary courage and daring, when compelled to flee the country on account of the cruel jealousy of Saul; a number of men alike courageous should attach themselves to him, and resolve to follow his fortunes. The determined patriot; his soul was ever disquieted, so long as the footprints of the uncircumcised were seen in the land. In dependence on his faithful band, he had struggled long and repeatedly, to exterminate the enemies alike of Israel and of God. Now fatigued and probably overcome with heat, he was compelled to lay him down on the parched ground, with the host of the Philistines in view, between him and his native city; reposing in fiendish triumph on the fields of his boyhood pastimes.

What a theme for the poet! What a scene for the painter! Every one is familiar with the story of the great English warrior, who mortally wounded.

and parched with the death thirst, received a cup of water, but observing as he raised it to his lips, the eye of a dying soldier rest wishfully upon it, handed it to him and bade him drink it, as needing it yet more than himself. But this is anticipating. We remark, this story is one of these narratives in sacred history, which are ever likely to be read and admired, not so much for the value of the lessons, as for the beauty of the facts. How strong its hold on the imagination ! having about it that air of chivalry and romance, which so captivates and dazzles the fancy. It is just such a story which we can hardly read, and not have before us all the scenery of the tented field, with the mailed champions, and the floating banners. In imagination, we picture before us, the royal warrior, David ; who having been in the thick of the struggle with the foe, is now faint with thirst, and lies exhausted in the midst of his champions. In this, his extremity and languor, he is heard to breathe a passionate wish for water from the well of Bethlehem, between which and himself lay the Philistine army. Singular indeed, that such a wish should have then found utterance. True, there were men all round attached as intrepid, and capable of attempting impossibilities at his bidding. But the complying with such a wish would be like rushing on

to destruction. What can courage and strength avail against a multitude. And then should they succeed in forcing a passage to the well, exhausted and overborne, they will never be able to return. However, acting upon the spirit of the adage "where there is a will there is a way," and hearing the wish though not given in the spirit of a command, three of his most intrepid warriors, in dependence on Divine aid, and without pausing to count the peril, rushed against the foe, resolved to force a passage. There they go! You can trace their course by the stir, the tumult and the crash; the enemy fall in heaps before and around them until they reach the well, when, without waiting to quench their thirst, they dip their helmet 'neath the mirrored surface of the water, and return again to a renewal of the conflict. Arduous and severe was the struggle to save and advance with the priceless contents of that warriors cup; but the long loud shout of the troops, falling like the lulling cadence of the harp upon the anxious ear of David, announces the safe return of his undaunted warriors. Excited, faint and weary, he holds the helmet in his hand, and as his thirsty lips are pressed to the edge of the cup, his eye grows sad and wild; the color leaves his cheek; when turning his head away, he pours the water on the ground

and exclaims ; “*shall I drink the blood of these men that put their lives in jeopardy, for with jeopardy of their lives they brought it.*”

What a multitude of observations, suggestive, press themselves upon our attention ! Gladly would we in fancy, linger around this consecrated spot ; and whilst surveying David and his host, record such lessons of instruction and wisdom, as are furnished by the scene. It is not the *heroism* of David in acting thus, which we propose for your imitation, or to which we intend inviting your attention. This, of itself, however, would furnish as fine a picture of forbearance and greatness as human story can give. We would rather request you to contemplate and pattern after the principle of *kindness* so forcibly exhibited in this occurrence. Not only of kindness between the governor and the governed, but in all the relations of social and domestic life. Kindness between parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, is the grand secret of government and the source of happiness. What an example is here set by these warriors to every man who is called for obedience, whether to man as subordinate, or God as Supreme. Whether we engage in the service of man or of Deity, who would not do well, first to stop and ponder their example, and consider

whether he is not yet far below such a model.

He who consults wishes as well as commands, will feel his whole aim to be, to "act for the employer as the employer would act for himself;" so that a description of their conduct, like that of the servants of David, will include singleness of purpose, diligence and faithfulness. Whether those warriors, prompted by the royal wish, were justified in running such a risk of life, we cannot now determine. "There was certainly a point at which obedience to God, would have forbidden obedience to their King; but we have no means of judging, whether in this case this had been reached. Be it right or wrong, the path was cut through the host of the Philistines to the waters of Bethlehem; and that upon the mere expressed wish of David. We have read tales of the devotion of domestics to the wishes and interests of their masters; but none have been found to exhibit such *strangeness* of devotion and singleness of purpose, as those who bore water from the well of Bethlehem. We cannot commend so highly, the conduct of the monarch. Knowing the devotedness of his followers, their attachment to his person, and their uncalculating bravery in his cause, he should not have given utterance to a wish which had not been well weighed; and with which he did not desire a literal compliance.

We can but commend his conduct, however, after having seen the consequence of giving utterance to the natural, though inconsiderate desire, in pouring the water upon the ground, as at once, an offering to the Lord, and a memorial of his folly. He could not partake of the fruit of his own transgression. "*An act of self-denial must be the punishment for a want of self-command.*" "If a man have grown *rich* by *dishonesty*, he ought, we believe, to become *poor* through *repentance.*" We shall not speak of the *symbolic* meaning of the circumstance, other than to remark in the language of another, "We need not long in vain for water from the well of Bethlehem. The host of the mighty has been broken through; a stronger than the strong has unlocked for us the flowings of the river of life; but oh! if we would take of the stream and live forever, we must acknowledge it as the blood of Him, who went on our behalf against principalities and powers;" and who finding the springs of human happiness dried, filled them from his own veins, and they gushed with immortality. "Who would not press through difficulty to obtain *such* a draught?"

"Eternal life is nature's *ardent wish.*"

"My blood is *drink* indeed," said he who slept in Bethlehem's humblest manger; of whom and his

birth-place, Ibn Haukal, a Mahometan writer says :
“Here Jesus, on whom be peace, was born of his mother.”

Bethlehem's well, consecrated to the memory of David, and a symbol of the “opened Fountain,” in the side of Jesus, his lineal descendant, will ever be shown to the passing Pilgrim, as a memorial of the truth of that Scripture in which their characters are described, and their actions recorded.

BESOR.

WHEN we contemplate the character of any nation of antiquity, we conclude that none were so favored and happy as that of Israel. Occupying a land which yielded a spontaneous subsistence, with a sky ever bright, they needed naught to make them happy. Sensible of these blessings, they cheerfully rejoiced in, and devoutly magnified the goodness of God. As a general feeling, the consciousness of *security* was all that the Jew desired. If he might continue to behold the temple on Moriah, and the palace on Sion, unmolested, if Jerusalem might stretch its streets from hill to hill, "spreading its gardens in the vales, and hanging its vineyards on the cliffs;" if he still might descry from afar the tents of the tribes, reposing in peace around the borders of the land; and hear the murmurs of Jordan, and the roar of the Mediterranean; and see Hermon and Lebanon "waving their glories;" and feel the cool breezes, that came from them, and swept southward, to refresh the sultry desert; he was contented and happy. How could such a people be unhappy?

how be unmindful of Him from whom they received these blessings? Occupying a land whose every breeze was laden with blessings; where the firmament brightened with joyous promises, it would be anomalous did they not realize—

“We are living, we are living
In a grand and awful time,
In an age, on ages telling,
To be living is sublime.”

Rising up, under the influence of such a sentiment, Moses spake amid the triumph of a glorious antiquity, “Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!” whilst one of their remoter sons, the “Seraph of prophecy,” was commissioned to say, “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.” Yet they forsook God, “the fountain of living waters,” and hewed out for themselves cisterns, “*broken cisterns which could hold no water.*” For these things the Lord had said, “I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the Lord, the God of hosts, and they shall afflict you, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river *Besor.*”

Judging from the description, (Amos, 6th chap.) they were in a most deplorable condition. Once they were honorably, happily and usefully identified with the cause and worship of God; their names

were "written in heaven," registered and attested in the books of grace and of glory. But now they are no more seen on either page. They were not so much blotted as washed out. The tears of the recording angels, both in heaven and on earth, fell upon them, and dissolved the faintest line. Once they were happiest when united with their brethren in gracious devotions and useful efforts; but now they absent themselves entirely from the service of the temple, or when perchance they presented themselves in the outer courts, they felt like outcasts, and despairing of mercy, looked coldly and censoriously around on their former and more devout companions. Once as a people they exulted in the hallowed contemplations of uplifted prayer, but now their eyes are fastened on the ground; and yet the shadow that lies in their path, and the lightning that glares at their feet, and the thunder which they can but hear, assure them that the cloud is over them, and the storm is stooping to its terrible task. Well might the guilty Jew tremble at the mention of the name *Besor*, as comprehending the painful extent of the punishment with which they were about to be visited. From this river of Egypt, on the south, to the entering of Hamath, on the north, his chastisement would extend. When

The land all desolate should lie,
Like burning clouds along the sky.

This visitation was not so much to punish them for their iniquities, as for not having been more fruitful and useful. None can please God, and advance through all the stages of christian experience, from repentance to holiness, without being useful. Unfruitfulness like the Israelites' is not absolute, but relative; not positive, but comparative. A tree may be good, and yet we may call it unfruitful; not because it bears no fruit, but a little fruit. A vine, being good, may be called unfruitful for the same reason. As on one tree there may be fruit, hanging thinly on all the branches; so on the vine the clusters may swell and ripen only here and there; and both may be called unfruitful for want of *plenteousness*. If we consult the welfare of our own souls, the prosperity of the church, and the glory of God, we will take care to have our "fruit unto holiness." Their internal dissensions were the cause of their delinquency. Indeed, it is hard to conceive how the vineyard can bring forth fruit, when the laborers are quarreling about the use of the means, the mode of culture, or of gathering. How many plants may perish in consequence of this division God only knows now; but they who are the cause of it, will

know to their sorrow hereafter. If the woman, by simply *touching* the *hem* of the Savior's garment, was made whole, how fearful the crime incurred by those who, by needless, unchristian exactions, repel the lowly applicant for mercy? If christian feuds were removed from the church, who can fail to discern, that the whole sacramental host of God's elect might move more irresistibly on to the world's redemption? Observation attests, that enough mental power is expended every year, by church champions against one another, to convert thousands to the Savior, if more consistently directed.

The river Besor, on the southern boundary of Canaan, as it indicated the extent of their territorial privileges, also marked the *measure* of their punishment. The capability to enjoy increases, in exact ratio, to the capability to suffer. If the sensitive, cultivated mind will be keenly alive to the slightest impressions of mental inaccuracy, and endure mental torture in the contemplation of a scarce perceptible deficiency in literary taste; angels, as superior in mental endowment, and occupying that peerless clime, favorable to the highest developement of the mental and moral faculties, may clearly perceive the vanity of those *ideal* perfections, that swell the heart of man. In illustration of the same thought,

the sinner, before having his conscience quickened by the Spirit's teachings, will not perceive the enormity of that guilt, under a sense of which the awakened sinner will almost despair of obtaining mercy. To the same purport are the lines of Cowley—

“When my new mind had no infusion known,
Thou gav'st so deep a tincture of thine own,
That ever since I vainly try
To wash away the inherent dye.”

Rising, as before described, in the mountainous portions of the tribe of Simeon, it flows in a westerly direction, and empties into the Mediterranean, near the ruins of Anthedon. It is *distinguished* in the history of the Jews, as the boundary of their territory; the crossing of which, whether for peace or war, seldom resulted in their advantage. So long as it shall flow, their punishment, extending from Hamath to this stream, will be remembered by the Jew with humbling penitence. Would God, his displeasure were now removed from that people, who now,

“From better habitations spurned,
Reluctantly dost rove;
Or grieve for friendships unreturned,
Or unregarded love.”
‡*

CHERITH—A BROOK.

IF the reader will refer to Mr. Sydney E. Morses' map of Palestine, he will discover near the confines of Ephraim and Benjamin, a dotted line, representing the spiral windings of this little periodical water course. Rising in the Quarantania mountains, it flows eastwardly, until its crystal, silvery-like waters, are lost amid the ever-rolling and muddy waters of the Jordan. Its precise locality is not important, to make it an interesting object to the student of sacred Geography. Perhaps, of all the streams and fountains of the Holy Land, none present more interesting subjects of meditation, than the brook of which Elijah was commanded to drink, whilst being fed by ravens, amid the overhanging rocks and deep shades through which it flows.

Every thing in connection with this Prophet, is of deep and abiding interest. Early taught the sinfulness and imperfection of his nature, and the integrity of Divine Providence, he was ever enabled to thank God for his goodness, whilst he reverently and heroically rejoiced in his commands. "The history of our race furnishes some few men, who are like

those mountain summits which repose in light, whilst all below is a deep shadow, To me, Moses independent of the inspiration he received from heaven, is the grandest man the world has produced. Intellectually, he towers above all before and after him. The level ray which should leave his forehead, would gild but few brows on the earth. By it, we might see the faces of Elijah, David and Isaiah; but scarce another, till we came to Paul." Inherently great as are these men, we never seem to attach much importance to their characters; unless they are presented to view, amid the most exciting and bewildering scenes. If Paul be the object upon which we are wont to gaze, we wish to contemplate him from the top of Mars Hill, with the gorgeous city at his feet, with the Acropolis and Parthenon behind him; or on the deck of his shattered vessel in the intervals of the crash of billows; or when speaking with a calm and determined tone, from within the gloomy walls of a prison. So in the contemplation of Elijah, we wish to see him on the broad summit of Carmel, where are congregated the Prophets and worshippers of Baal, two thousand feet above the level of the sea, which retiring with reverent murmurs from its base, mirrors out on its billows the host of infatuated worshippers. After having in vain sought the attention

and implored the protection of their dumb deity, they gave up in despair, and were compelled to desist from the exciting and tumultuous scene. After which Elijah, praying, when as yet the ardent accents trembled on his lips, there came from the cloudless heaven, fire, falling like lightning upon the sacrifice, burned to the consuming altar, sacrifice and all, until the water was licked from the trenches. Then suddenly a murmur, coming up from the prostrate and awe-struck multitude, swelling louder and louder like the gathering roar of the sea, rolled out on the hazy atmosphere in accents of triumphant adoration.

Then, when standing by a gloomy cave on Horeb, we contemplate him with enthusiastic regard, whilst the hurricane's resistless blast, strews the mountain sides all round with wreck and chaos. Repressing the feeling of wonder, we may find more to admire, when through the deep quiet and breathless hush that succeeded the earthquake and the storm, there came a still small voice, the lulling cadence of which had not ere then fallen upon mortal ear ; and which, though small and still, thrilled through the Prophet's frame with electric power, and rose so clear and sweet,

‘ That all in heaven and earth might hear,
It spoke of peace—it spoke of love ;
It spoke as angels speak above.’

We retire to the banks of the Jordan, where the brook Cherith pours its little compliment of water, to aid in swelling the life current of the Holy Land. The whole scene, far as the eye can scan the desert, is wild and terrible. Dead silence reigns, interrupted only by the cry of the bittern. No human foot-prints are seen. We will, in imagination, enter the thicket, where no pathway opening to our view, we commence our advance, measured by Jordan's murmurs. Through one thicket and another; through rocky and narrow passes, we onward tread, until reaching a deep narrow glen, the winding brook by which we have ascended, comes murmuring along, and pours down upon us through the rocky masses. We stand at the base of the rock, over which the stirring water dashes its silver spray. The brook seems to speak in prophetic murmurs of other waters, which God would pour upon the thirsty land; and of springs which should break forth in the desert. Here, as the evening shades advance, throwing their lengthened forms around the spot, we lift our eyes, and casting a glance to the opposite side, see a venerable form covered with a coarse hairy mantle, sitting in the attitude which bespeaks calm holy reflection. Oppressed with the deep solitude, and weary with travel, we need not hesitate, in recogni-

zing the form of the Prophet. As a punishment for the sins of Israel, and as an illustration of his zeal for the honor of God, he had prayed that it might not rain. The answer was, that it was according to the will of God. In a country like that of Israel, where the "former and latter rain" were indispensable, it was a severe punishment. The land became desolate. The rays of that sun which before diffused a smile over the face of nature, now gleamed upon the earth with its scorching beams. The withering and unknown Sirocco dried up every rivulet and fountain. Plants ever green, and trees which hitherto waved at the fanning of the breeze, dropped their leaves and withered away. Wild beasts moaned in the forests, and bleating flocks, and living herds, explored in vain for food. Amid all this desolation, there stood the Prophet of Israel, like some ancient venerated column, within the shadow of which all that is fresh and green, alone can exist. And yet, like Sampson, standing in the temple of Dagon, in calling down destruction upon his own and his country's enemies, he seemed about to perish in the general ruin. The prayer once offered and accepted, could not be recalled when its answer involved the Divine honor. The match with which the vengeance of Jehovah was to be kindled to explosive fury, was

already thrown, and none were able to bring it back. Nothing now remained to him, in common with the wicked, by whom he was surrounded, but the conviction that God had made the heavens to gleam like sapphire, as a means of just and vindictive punishment. And now, though sad and ready to repent of such a prayer, his heart can do nothing but mourn and complain ; or as a means of solace, reflect upon his former cheerful emotions. With the Prophet, we often realize, when imminent dangers encompass, or the waves of trouble come suddenly around us, that the watchword "Master, awake we perish," is sufficient to secure the Divine attention, and enlist in our aid his Omnipotent power. Often, by some external help, or by some spiritual testimony and assurance of his grace is given us as an evidence of his complacent regard. We are at once enabled to bear our temporal burdens, and rejoice in anticipation of future trials. These seasons of desolation, like that experienced by Elijah, are often intended to make us appreciate more joyfully, those blessings which he intends to bestow upon us. For after the endurance of sorrow, nothing can be more soothing and gratifying, than the visitation of Divine love. The voice of Christ never sounds with such enrapturing melody as when in seasons of trouble, doubt and privation.

he unexpectedly knocks at our door, and gives us evidence that he regards us with complacency. The Prophet was not long left to his sorrowful musings, in the sad and solitary condition in which we observe he was placed. If the heavens were dark to all else, there was a bright, clear open space above the head of Elijah; around which the bow of promise and protection gleamed hopeful and beautiful, as when spanned around the soft bright cloud of summer.

“The word of the Lord came unto him, saying, get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, which is before Jordan and it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee.” Singular as was this command, it was sufficient to induce him, who was afterwards borne up above his troubles in a fiery chariot, surrounded by angels, to accept the command, and depart for the place of safety. There we found him in our imaginary excursion, after having endured near twelve months confinement, amid the solitary gloom of that deep, dark wilderness.

Often, when reading this interesting account of the Prophet at the brook Cherith, we have pictured him, depressed and wearied with his exile, bending his face to the earth, amid the deep solitude by

which he was surrounded. Hard as would have been his fate to have perished in the general famine, this might seem to have been a more cruel affliction. But God sees not as man seeth; his ways are not as ours. Amid the gloom of the wilderness, his blissful presence is found. Fear not Elijah! Lift up thine eye and look to the rock neath the dark shadow of which thou art now fallen, and let it speak of the "rock" on which thy hope doth rest. Let the trees, neath the dependent branches of which thou dost repose, speak of the waving palm and the tree of life, in whose shade thou shalt rest, and from whose bending branches, shall be furnished thee an everlasting supply.

Thoughts of these things, served to raise the bowed form of the Prophet, who, looking encouragingly up, saw the bright forms of many cheerful songsters, perched on the swinging branches, whilst their carol vespers rolled out on the evening air, like the song of spirit voices, causing him to feel,

"If in this heart, a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again;
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'Twill flow and cease to burn my brain."

Then when the morning dawned in Cherith's rocky vale, the cry of innumerable ravens, reflecting the

first beams of the rising sun, on their dark pinions, was heard aloft amid the trees, bearing the days provision to the Prophet of God. Loosing the natural voraciousness of their species, these creatures coming and going on their heavenly mission, to and from the Prophet's retreat, in denying their own appetites performed a most interesting office. "He who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God, and wander for lack of meat" employed them to minister to the necessities of his servant. Every fountain exhausted; every forest stream dried up; one stream—the brook Cherith, continued clear and fresh, and full, as though Jordan still poured o'er its rocky bed; whilst the whole land was parched, and crisp, and dry, one spot—the Prophet's vale—continued fresh and green, and cool. Adhering, as we steadfastly hope to do, to the doctrine of God's providence, we rejoice in the "Lord God of Elijah." The Prophet long since made his exit from Cherith and Israel, in a chariot all brilliant with glory.

Formed by the Architect that built the skies,"

From the time its burning wheels rested on the "Mount of God," century after century rolled away, and whilst walking with the "harpers" through the

rich meadows, and by the flowing fountains of the upper Paradise, the remembrance of Cherith had been almost lost amid its glories. At length, standing amid the "celestial worthies," he was summoned away with Moses, to witness the transfiguration of Him, whom angels "delight to worship." Enveloped with the same cloud which displayed the glories of their Master, Peter, James and John, might well exclaim, as they look up, *"it is good to be here; let us build three tabernacles; one for Christ, one for Moses, and one for Elias."*

Well did the disciples say, "it is good to be here," it is good to be on the Mount of Christian enjoyment, where without a dimming veil, our eye may joyful view the "Mount of God." It is good too, in seasons of distress, and as preparatory to "scale" that Mount, to sit down in hopeful complacency, and drink of the murmuring brook.

CHEBAR—A RIVER.

WE may be led to conclude, from a superficial view of the nature and design of prophecy, that the evidence of the inspiration from which it professes to be derived, will rise in precision and importance in proportion to the clearness of the revelation. This supposition might, indeed, be correct, were it not reserved for human agents to carry into effect the event predicted; and were not the evidence of the divine intention, which prophecy conveys, intended to produce a rational conviction of their truth. Though prophecy might be so far involved as to leave those who were instrumental in carrying it into effect, so wholly unfettered in their freedom as to be unconscious of the purpose achieved; it should yet possess a precision, that when carried into effect, the observer could have no reason to doubt that the prediction so far agreed with the event, as not to assimilate with any other. These observations have been made in view of the seeming obscurity with which many of the prophecies have been invested. They are, however, not so greatly hidden as will, in any essential, impair their harmony or importance. In the inter-

pretation of prophecy, as of all Scripture, the only safe and proper method, is by collation of the several parts; like the sun's rays converged in the water drop, every tint of moral excellency and beauty will be reflected from this consecrated focus of love and wisdom. Concentrating in this way the burthen of all prophecy, whether of more remote or later revelation, we feel assured to say, the terms in which God's purposes, on the introduction of the Israelites into Canaan, are revealed, are not more explicit than those in which his intentions are declared to be fulfilled, in the introduction of the spiritual Israel to their everlasting rest.

We hope these remarks will be borne in mind, as we contemplate the scene on which such singularly important visions were revealed to the prophet Ezekiel.

The river Chebar takes its rise in the mountain ranges south of Arrarat, flowing first south, and then west, until it empties into the Euphrates, near the town of Charchemish. Like the streams of the Alps, rising in gorges covered by eternal snow, the deep roar of mountain torrents furnishes an inexhaustible supply to this river, hallowed in the annals of prophecy. This river, like the "junction" of the Arve and the Rhone, seems to be a concentrated

object of contemplation. Both are the emblems of mysteries deep and unutterable. It is vain for man to embrace the wide-spread scenes of earth in his gaze, when nature appears thus centered in two or three cherished spots, around which he may ever fondly linger. It is vain to perplex ourselves in the study of the deep and unutterable mysteries of Bible history, when there are two or three bright promises, clear and plain, on which we can fix our hope and attention, and repose on forever, with feelings of ecstasy and joy. Sometimes our mind, without an effort, rests like a summer cloud on the mountain summit, drinking up the bright sunshine beneath; and then again, floating here and there, is driven like some maddened spirit before the storm. There are scenes and associations capable of holding in abeyance the mind's wildest imaginings. The heart that loves us is its strongest tie; which, like our home of affection by the side of some beautiful bay, is a point peeping amid the dark green foliage of the trees, from which our eyes will not turn, though the boundless ocean of light and waves glitters in the sun beneath our vision. This is natural. 'Tis proper to love those whose home of affection exists only in our bosom. To refuse affection to those who love us, is unjust to those to whom we owe our regard

Strip life of the heart that loves you, and what remains? Blot out the locality and the house that form the home of your heart, and all is a dazzling blank, into which we look, without finding love or repose.

This river, the scene on which such strange and mysterious visions were shown, was also the place where the prophet learned to truly love his people. Here was revealed the force of that spirit-stirring sentence, "Should not the shepherd feed his flocks." Here his heart throbbed with the glory of the promise—"I will sprinkle clean water upon the nation, and ye shall be clean: a new heart also will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart which is within you, and give you a heart of flesh. (Ezek. xxxvi: 25, 26.) 'Twas by Chebar's waters that the idea of seeing the captives restored, and Jerusalem again the joy of the land, was first conceived.

Here he contemplated that delightful union of heart and life, between the children of his people, which diffused such soft and radiant light through his soul. We may suppose this feeling was vague and indefinite, until when by the banks of the river, the cloud of vision was lifted up from his soul. After this, he was so forcibly impressed with God's love

for the people, that the teachings of the vision, striking forcibly upon his heart, vibrated to its inmost chord. Here, after the retiring of the heavenly vision, that certain calmness which is always produced in the agitated mind, after the cessation of doubt, took possession of his soul, inspiring obedience to Him to whose service he had been called.

There are many things in nature tending to inspire hope and joy. Our heart follows the objects of attachment, like light on the sea, which gives the undulating waves an oscillating movement, and prolongs the vessel's dazzling track, until it disappears on the horizon. These brilliant objects of life please us much, and serve to lull to sleep those useless, feverish emotions of the soul, which waste away both mind and imagination, before that period when our destiny and duty summon us to take an active part in the busy world. The ideal, visionary world, the world of soul and sentiment, has perhaps a still greater influence than all other causes, in formation of our characters. Music and poetry are but the themes upon which each one raises up his own feelings and actions. Nature itself, that from which all music and poetry derive their power, will be still more powerful and permanent in its impressions; so that a few wreaths of sunshine, streaming through the clouds which

float in eddying vapors around our mountain home, can never be effaced from the mind. If, when on the bank of an undulating river, coursing its way through a deep valley, wrapped in a covering of fog, we look up with awe, reverence and affection, to some lovely rainbow in the mist; how, think you, the mind of the prophet was impressed, when on the banks of the Chebar, there was revealed to him, amid the eddying clouds with which the vale was enveloped, such sights as mortal eye had ne'er beheld! Like the supposed scene, though more sublimely terrific, were some of the visions of the prophet. Yet, *as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud, in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of that glory of the Lord. And when I saw it I fell upon my face, and I heard the voice of one that spake, saying, whether the house of Israel hear or whether they forbear, be not afraid of them or of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions, be not afraid of them or their looks.*" As the scenes, teachings and associations of early years haunt us, from spot to spot, like the murmuring of some insect, called into existence neath a loving summer sky, so this vision of the prophet, ever be-

fore him, filled his mind with its remembrance, and aided him in the task of moral reformation.

So Saint Paul, with his eye placed on regions beyond the ken of ordinary mortals, and kindling on the glories it was not permitted him to reveal, presses forward to a fadeless kingdom and incorruptible crown. This was that which, when repelling the sneer of the haughty Tertullus, before Felix, caused him to forget his bonds, the noble audience before him, and the coming fate; whilst nought but "the Throne of Judgment," before which were gathered all nations, as the Archangel's trump, pealing the knell of time, revealed the resurrection morn. As a priest, to Ezekiel, the mystic breast-plate, gleaming with oracular jewelry, was a symbol of of majesty and power, trivial in importance when compared with the vision of the "four beasts with wings;" of a "wheel in the middle of a wheel;" or the mystic hand gleaming through the cloud, holding that fearful roll, "written within and without, with lamentations, and mourning, and woe." Ever after these visions, he reproved the Jews, and others to whom he speaks, with a fearlessness and zeal, which well comport with the holiness of God, the iniquities of the people, and the tremendous consequences resulting from it. Long as prophecy shall

be fulfilling, shall the visions of Chebar be esteemed sacred.

DEAD SEA.

It may appear a desecration, to associate with the sacred fountains of the Holy Land the dark waters of the Lake Asphaltites; a lake concerning which the common, though erroneous tradition is, that no living creature can exist in its saline and sulphurous waters. But as our purpose is to speak of those waters, and only those, which are in some way associated with important events in Bible history, we could not overlook the sea, with which our youthful fancy was wont to associate a scene of most terrific grandeur. We could perhaps forget some of the less important water courses; we might even fail to remember the particulars connected with the pool of Bethesda, and the Fountains of Elisha; but to forget the lake which rolls its dark waters o'er the desolate and wicked cities of the plain, would be as impossible as to blot from the divine record, the

luminous page on which their fearful doom is inscribed.

The names and fate of these places were treasured in our earliest recollections; and we learned to speak of them in our infant prattle. As we grew in years and stature, those wicked acts which rendered them present and perceptible to the soul, were exhibited, time and again, to our excited fancy. And when the evening family vespers were sung, and our mother's knee became our familiar altar, at which time the countenance of the mother, ever sweet, beams with a gentler lustre, we have summoned all our strength, and clinging to her with a tenacity made strong by excited feeling, have implored protection from the fate of Sodom. This sea, remarkable as the covering beneath which are buried the obscured ruins of cities, renowned as objects of special vindictive vengeance, is situated on the east of the land of Canaan, of which those on the east or Arabian side are the most rocky. All round, far as the vision extends the region bears an aspect of the utmost sterility, showing neither vegetation, nor the habitation of man or beast; indicating that a country which was so wicked as to require the exterminating hand of God to cleanse it, should bear in all ages the marks of his displeasure. And surely, that pro-

fanation of self, that suicidal destruction of worth and beauty, and all that was worth preserving, was enough to send the daily pang to the soul of "righteous Lot," and render them fit subjects of divine vengeance. Surely the casket will be little valued, when robbed of its most precious and valuable jewel. So man, stript of his virtue, integrity and honor, deserves to sink into oblivion; where the ensnaring and delusive lustre of his fatal example will be forever obscured. Man, without piety, is deprived of that life, which will enable him to move among the community in such a way as will promote his own happiness and their good; and is like the leper, whose unsightly and offensive person is an object to be justly shunned. The laws of society and nature, intended to be promotive of the general good, wisely remove the lifeless body from "our sight." Shall man, in matters which merely concern his present happiness, act more wisely than the God whose providence is our hope and stay? Pointing to the dark-rolling of these waters, which for ages have covered the place of His abhorrence, we have an abundant refutation of this almost impious conjecture. There where the moonbeam falls, but to reflect darkly the ripple of these waters, which have beaten for ages against the shore, we seem to hear the spirits of the

abandoned dead, pouring on the cheerless ear, the lone sound of lamentation and woe; appropriate emblem of those dark waters which beat around the soul, when sterile and unfruitful, it is deprived of all light and hope; and like the moonbeam on the surface of this dark sea, it sinks beneath the swelling wave, and is lost forever.

How often, sitting down in the evening twilight, as the dark shadows stole around our early home, have we tried to realize the kindly visits of those angels who, coming in the *evening* to Sodom, warned Lot of his danger, and announced its fearful doom. I seemed to be with them; and entering the streets with hesitating steps, trembled lest I myself should not escape the impending doom. Then, too, have seemed to see the devoted cities, as the first streakings of the dawn broke on the morning sky; when the footsteps of the servants, long echoing through the houses, answered but the caroling of the feathered songsters, perched on the pending vine branches encircling their dwellings. In one house only, was the sound of preparation and prayer. True all that affection could do, all that faithful entreaty could accomplish, was done, to induce the sons-in-law of Lot to abandon the place. All was vain; and with a sad heart Lot turned him away, solicited, pressed

to escape for his life. What, O what! was to become of those endeared objects, borne in his bosom and cradled under the paternal roof? Those children for whom he had cared, and who were the image and reflex of all save the internal nobility of the father, were about to linger and perish. A portion of that family, who were but his second self, and of whom he hoped they would transmit his own character and feelings to succeeding generations, and who often assembled in the little family group, displayed that union of hearts which linked them to each other and rendered visible their feelings, were now doomed to destruction. It must not, could not be. Still he pressed, still they lingered; until, laying hold of the grieved and sorrow-stricken father, they tear him from his home and kindred. Ere this he had many sorrows; but he was like one of that race of oaks, which vegetate and renew their existence until the day the axe is laid at their roots. A patriarch and a servant of God, he hoped for nothing but to spend the evening of his days amid the domestic enjoyments and the retiracy of his home; until his holy example should at least secure the salvation of his family. Having lost none of his children, he fondly hoped, in closing his eyes forever, that the heavens had exhausted its storms for a long period, and that life

would prove more peaceful to those to whom, when leaving his home, he bequeathed it.

“The sun had risen upon Zoar,” when Lot entered the adjacent grove of this the monumental city of his faith and prayer. The least of the five cities, it was probably less criminal than the others. Stripped of all his property, and doomed forever, from the force of his afflictions, to an ignoble retiracy, it was still natural he should cling to the least remnant of departed glory. Pride and evil associations, the great sources of his unhappiness, still seemed to have their influence on his character, and he left with regret the scenes of a residence he should have avoided with abhorrence.

I have pictured for my profit, this man, torn from his residence, only to be saved that he might behold the tragic end of his wife, and reflect with feelings of sorrow on the fearfully calamitous event. Like some new-fledged bird, with a heart unable to endure its weight of anguish, he had fallen from his nest, made warm with the tenderness of a family, upon the cold, damp ground of adversity. On the first night after his departure, would the soul of this sorrow-stricken father burn with an unspeakable desire for the meadows in which his flocks were wont to roam, and for that home, which once the object of solici-

tude, was now obscured by the smoke of the ruined cities, ascending up until the top vapors grew pale and thin on the arch of the moonlit heavens. And when retired to his cave, he would seize in the sighing of the wind, the song of the vesper bird ; or in the rustling of the leaves, those memories of the ear, which awakened reminiscences in his home but yesterday, all happy. Sad was his heart, and deep was his regret of that strange infatuation, which, in leaving Abraham, induced him to "pitch his tent toward Sodom." Yet, these *former* joys now forever blighted, were destined to form for him, that family of the soul, to which, though he owed not his life, he would owe all of that happiness, which ever after, was to form a portion of the bliss which is mercifully granted to sufferers in the most destitute condition. But, then, when we view Lot in this sad condition, we can but see the vanity of those riches and honors which first induced him to sacrifice the approbation of his God, for the poor paltry prize of worldly advancement. These phantoms of the imagination, pursued with so much vigor, and in the possession of which, we hope to derive so much pleasure, are observed all round the sea, neath the roll of whose wave the city is forever obscured, and like sentinel spirits, linger around the grave of the loved and lost.

The covetousness of Lot's wife, which caused her to "look back" as they were leaving the valley while evidencing her base ingratitude, at the kindness shown in sending angels to deliver, was also just cause why God's anger was so hot as to deprive her of life, and make her an everlasting monument of sordidness and shame. After this, the cities of the plain were immediately destroyed by fire and brimstone, when the whole adjacent country sunk below its former level, and the place was covered with water.

An obscured cave, high up on the side of some neighboring mountain, held the family and possessions of him, who, preferring great wealth, and its increase to the society of Abraham, was now deprived alike, of that which he sought, and that which he despised. The turbid waters of the Jordan, winding amid steep and fallen banks, and dark thickets, which in many places renders it inaccessible to the traveller, flows into this stagnant lake, which having no visible outlet, its waters are lost forever. Its waters in general, are shallow toward the shore, but rises and falls with the seasons, and the quantity of water carried into it by the Jordan and other streams. It also appears to be either on the increase or to be lower in some years than others ; which makes it probable that those travellers are to be

credited, who assert that they have beheld the ruins of cities, either exposed or engulphed beneath its waters. Two aged and respectable inhabitants of Jerusalem, told Mr. Maundrell, the traveller, that they had once been able to see some parts of these ruins; that they were near the shore, and the water so shallow at the time, that they, together with some Frenchmen, went into it and found several pillars and fragments of buildings. Josephus says, he perceived traces or shades of the cities on the banks of the lake.

When then, we suppose that at the first, these guilty cities were not entirely overwhelmed with the waters, but remained partially exposed to view, as monuments of the judgments of God, these authorities will not be despised. The specific gravity of the water, has ever been a fruitful subject of speculation. The analysis of the waters by Dr. Marcet of England, would seem to confirm the most exaggerated estimate. As Dr. Durbin the recent American traveller, declares he waded into the water carefully, to test the oft-repeated statements of the great specific gravity of this fluid, and repeated the experiment several times; the uniform result was, that when the water rose above the armpits, but not over his shoulders, his body was balanced, and he could

not touch the bottom, but his feet tended strongly to rise, and his head to descend; "on the surface he lay still as a knot of wood." We might multiply our observations to an indefinite extent, as suggested by this singular and important sea. We direct attention to the following, leaving to the spirit, the work of personal application. In "pitching" his tent toward Sodom, we see manifested upon the part of Lot, a preference of mere temporal prosperity, to the spiritual well being of himself and family. This was a most dangerous manifestation of selfishness. When we prefer houses and lands, wealth and honor to the salvation of the soul; when we prefer evil associations, and forsake permanent good for anticipated pleasure, we imitate the example of Lot, and may be considered as having "*pitched our tent toward Sodom.*" The commencement of an evil course is always dangerous. As to commence the work of christian obedience, is but receiving the interest in advance of our inheritance above. So the commencement of a course of crime is but receiving the interest on the magnitude of future evil; and in truth, is but paying the advance on that contract which results in our everlasting undoing. The traveller who may visit this spot ages hence, will doubtless find the surface of this sea, as desolate and un-

frequented as at the present hour. No country thickly dotted with villages, farms and vineyards, each provided with its reservoir of water, drawn from the Jordan for the purpose of constant irrigation, and yielding in Eden-like abundance, all the luscious and delicate products of the temperate and equatorial zones will ever be shown, for the molten lake, but dimly mirroring peerless stars, shall continue as evidence of God's displeasure.

EUPHRATES—A RIVER.

PERHAPS there is no subject upon which there has been more frequent and absurd conjectures, than upon the probable situation of the garden of Eden. Each one has had a favorite situation, which he has seen fit to defend with a zeal and an earnestness commensurate with the presumed importance of a correct decision. In all of these conjectures, we find as great disagreement as on an occasion when man, similarly presuming to elevate his knowledge above that which would be beneficial, had their language confounded, so that they could no longer understand or communicate their thoughts to one another. All reasoning and conclusions upon this subject, naturally appears unsatisfactory ; when we reflect that the surface of the earth must have been broken up and convulsed by the universal deluge, which in many instances, altered, if it did not obliterate the courses of many rivers. Many other changes in the face of the country, produced as the obvious consequences of the general desolation, would make it difficult at any period, to determine its precise locality. Most probably, after the expulsion of our first parents from

the garden, God chose to blot out this beautiful spot from his creation, and so destroy, both the scene and the memorial of man's transgression. The learned Huetius and others, suppose Eden to have been placed in the southern part of Babylonia, not far from the Persian Gulf, where they conjecture the Tigris and Euphrates joined, and afterward separated; others supposing the Euphrates to have been the same with the Hinmend or Hindmend, think Eden must have been situated somewhere in the eastern part of the Persian Empire, or in the country now called Cabulistan, between Persia and Hindoostan. These conjectures however, do not well accord with the description given, from which we would suppose the most probable idea, concerning the situation of Paradise, would be to place it in or near Armenia. All agree, that to the rivers Euphrates, Hiddekel, Pison and Gihon, we must look alone for data, upon which to found a conclusion respecting the location of Eden. The former of these, we have alone selected, as important to be placed with the sacred rivers of the Bible. Not, but that the others might be fruitful of interest, but because this alone bears a distinctive character in the more modern history of the Bible. With the exception of the Pison, which encompassed the land of Havillah, a region aboun-

ding in gold, our conjectures could be but vague and uncertain. Yet, to me, the study of this portion of Scripture history, gleaming with the spirit of poesy, when fancy picturing the retired shades and airy walks of Eden; canopied with trees ever verdant, from which the evening vespers of innumerable birds, rolling out on the still air their note of praise, has ever been delightful. The moment when the infant mind, is directed to the contemplation of this, the first and most interesting locality of Bible history; the serene warmth of soul which induces his attention, can never be extinguished during after years of study, toil and care. Then, the young mind realizing itself as introduced into the treasure house of the human heart, where divine love, deficient in the intoxication and raptures of a sensual passion, has a counterpoise in the infinity and eternity of the Being, who is the object of adoration. Alas ! when reviewing the past, we are all constrained to admit, how many false gems of affection have fallen little by little to us, accompanied by disenchantment and disgust, in place of the wonders and delights of that affection, then and there existing. Even now, the christian turns from the contemplation of the brief history of Eden, with more sorrowful regret than would a traveller, who had looked for

the last time upon the mountains, the torrents, the water-falls, the ruins perched upon the rocky summits, or the chalets peeping from beneath the pine and beech groves of the Alpine regions. Then, but not now, our whole life centered in the dreams of childhood, when the enthusiasm of our youth allows us to wander amid scenes in intellect and nature of ever-variegated bliss; we are fully prepared to enter into the spirit, and appreciate the beauty of scripture narratives, being freed from that open depravity which brutalizes the imagination, and is the "parody of physical and moral beauty." Filled with the most passionate admiration of the romantic and wisely restrained by parental authority from perusing those dangerous and enchanting works which inspire disgust for real life; with what potency will the more than personified and ideal images of scripture narrative strike upon the infant mind. Then, when enveloped in the shade of the sanctuary, our sports and our friendships are forgotten, in a kind of meditative concentration of look and features, as the scenes of Bible history, with their alternate lights and shadows, are placed before us by the venerable minister. And so susceptible is the infant mind of pious impressions, that these scenes will arrest the fancy, with the singular prominence

of an island bathed in light emerging from the sea, towering aloft into the blue heavens, and breaking on the sight like the dream of a poet, during the "sleep of a summer night." We listen to these instructions with that species of rapture, as the boatman to the sonorous drip of the water which falls in measured harmony from his oars. Even now, though steeped in the crimes of adult years, the effort to rejuvenate our moral sensibilities by a recurrence to these sacred associations, would be beneficial, when the gem of infant piety, viewed through the vista of years, and enlivened by the Spirit, appears like a floating spark upon the summit of the waves, now for the moment unseen, ever about to be extinguished and then enkindling with greater lustre. These visions of Paradise, like the dew-drop from the flower, have been shaken from the soul by the winds of adversity, and the storm-passion, but their remembrance, like the Euphrates of Eden, shall continue a perpetual memorial of our bliss.

This river rising in the mountains of Arminia, running south-west and south-east, through the frontier of Capadocia, Syria, and Arabia Deserta on the West, and Mesopotamia on the East, passes through Chaldea or Babylonia, and empties by several outlets into the Persian Gulf. The waters with which

it unites some sixty miles above its mouth, passes out in the same channel. If Poets forsaking the domain of affection, seek for genius afar off, and amid the inspiring memories of the past, where could a more sublime field be presented, than amid the deserted ruins of the country, through which this river winds its solitary way. Time quickly effaces every object, but time, though destroying the traces of the mighty cities which stood upon its banks, can never obliterate the impressions their history has made on succeeding nations. What scenes have here been enacted! What gorgeous visions of empire and glory, have rested like a summer cloud on the margin of the streams, until wafted by the winds of heaven, they rolled into some distant mountain gorge to rest in obscurity and gloom. What sad hearts, captives of other lands have gathered on its banks, where, hearing the ripple of the waves, as they threw a slight fringe of spray around the rocks, whilst adjacent hills bathed in the soft purple twilight, seemed like huge floating shadows of their own distant clime. Even now, though ages intervene, fancy pictures the "captive Jews," as arm in arm they wend their tearful way, whilst their long shadows blended into one, like living shrouds, track their footsteps before the time. Saddened by the successive departure] of

friend after friend, under the fearful pressure of unequalled woe, driven from their country, doomed to an eternal bereavement of the heart, and forsaken by the world; they sat them down in sadness, whilst the throbbing of their bosoms spoke but too plainly, that the contact of those warm hearts but dissolved the thoughts that froze within them, as the dew of night ever congeals on plants which are most exposed. Oppressed by former ingratitude, overwhelmed with present calamity, the tears of penitence mingled with the ardent supplication, that they might once more feast their eyes with a look on the heights of Zion, or that the last sigh which would efface from their minds forever, the dark and doubtful future, might die upon the slight ripple of the closing wave. God did not so determine. When in other lands, the broad Nile reflected the prostrate form, and echoed out on its waters the wail of their fathers' woe; deliverance with an "high hand and stretched out arm," was wrought for them. So now, their dreams and gestures, looks and words of happiness, which were spoken with the fear that the spring-time of their deliverance would never bloom, had now come up as a "memorial before God." Bidding them turn to the evening breeze to dry their tears, required in a voice like the softest notes, that the speechless

agony of their hearts be forever forgotten, and the "remembrance of Zion," as the treasure of hope, should evermore be cherished. For the time had now come, when the memory of all they had endured, like the hated crime from which the sinner turns in the hour of deepest penitence, would but appear in the past, as the leafless tree shown on the dark background of the river's shore. The disposition to oppress, (than which no disposition so well deserves the execration of the wise and good,) now received its just and fearful rebuke. Dark and fearful was the night, when the bachanals' song and shout rang through the crowded streets of Babylon. Around her ancient towers the multitudes reel, while the infamous hosanna to their pagan gods rolls out on the midnight air, like the loud roar of wave "impelling wave." Like water from the fountain, flows the intoxicating draught, while lust and revelry walked the streets unchecked. Looking upon the massive walls, which, while the clouds seemed to rest on their summit, ten horsemen could securely drive amid the ethereal mists, they feared not danger, though surrounded by a besieging foe. As the eye of the besieged, from some interior elevation, swept round the circuit of the walls, fifty miles in circumference, and saw their hundred gates of brass

flashing in the sunbeams, and the hanging gardens, loaded with shrubs, whilst sparkling fountains leaped from beneath gayly decorated arches, he might well exclaim, in despite of the "captives'" prayers, will Belshazzar "*exalt his throne amid the stars of heaven!*" At that moment, in a retired hall of the intoxicated monarch, apart from the tumultuous crowd, might be seen princes, and nobles, and their wives, all arrayed as for an occasion of mirth. The gay, the voluptuous, and the proud are there; men of high renown, and women whose beauty out-dazzled the splendor by which they were surrounded; whilst amid archways and corridors, and statues, an endless profusion of ornaments are exhibited; all which combine to form a scene of such dazzling splendor, that the spectator is bewildered and lost in the midst. Ever and anon bursts of music came swelling aloft amid the columns, and then died away in soft and lulling cadences. From the consecrated vessels of the Hebrews' temple, they drank confusion to the God of Israel, and "*praised their gods of gold and silver, and brass and stone.*"

In the midst of their revelry the music stopped its joyous burst, whilst the shriek of the fainting, or the tumultuous sigh of fear, reigned throughout the apartment. The sudden flash of an illuminated

hand came forth and wrote upon the plaster of the wall, which when the dread line was finished, the quivering monarch, letting fall the untasted goblet, gazed on the mystic finger, which seemed to say to his guilty soul, "*read thy doom.*"

Astrologers vainly attempted to solve the mysterious writing. Then Daniel, one of the long neglected Hebrew captives, being sent for, and coming into the king, with his finger pointed above to the God whom the king had scorned, and looking steadfastly on the palid monarch, read aloud his doom, written in letters of fire on the walls of his palace—"God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it," for "thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." We may not repeat the tale of woe, of carnage, and death. How that scarce had the footsteps of the retiring prophet died along the silent corridors, when the shout of the foe broke, like the sound of bursting billows, over the city. How that entering underneath the ponderous gates, which closed over the channel of the Euphrates, they were pouring in countless numbers through the streets, to the gates of the palace, where the fragment of the royal army, making their last, desperate stand, were overborne by the might of

the Medean warrior. Or yet, how the king, throwing himself amid his guard, to make the last brave effort for his life and his kingdom, at last vanquished and trampled under foot, expired in the midst of his dying followers. Over the sickening scenes of that terrible night we would draw the veil of oblivion. There are some scenes which, though recorded "for our learning," are yet of so fearful and horrifying a nature, that they can serve no purpose but to inspire a disgust for the actors, and a hatred to the principles by which they were inspired. Of this kind are the events recorded as here transpiring. Sin, wherever displayed, whether by the king on his throne, or the beggar in the dust, is to the christian alike disgusting. No elevation to which men ordinarily attain, can secure them from the reproaches of the virtuous and good; especially if subjected to their wicked and iniquitous government. Neither the wisdom of rulers, the strength of fortifications, nor the might of armies, are a security against the just judgments of the Almighty. Whilst the virtuous, though weak and defenceless, are conscientiously secure against the calamities of life, the wicked, environed with nought but the work of his hands, shall exclaim in the hour of distress—"Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?" From the

history of the Jews, in connection with the train of providences by which they were delivered, teaches that "*God hath sworn by two immutable things, in the which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.*"

We would remark in confirmation, that the present desolation of Babylon was predicted by Isaiah, two hundred years before its signal overthrow. Seeing his people carried away captive, the holy temple plundered of her treasures, the God of his fathers held in derision, his soul takes fire; when looking to the future, he sees the day of vengeance, and by a train of poetry never equalled, a chorus of Jews are caused to sing their astonishment at the overthrow of the oppressor. Babylon has fallen, and her glory gone forever. In a few years a magnificent pile of ruins was all that remained of her former splendor. Her strong towers and battlements slowly crumbled back to their original dust, and silence and desolation reigned where once the hum of a mighty population had sounded. The dust of the desert has long since covered the ruins; but neither time nor the sirocco can divert from its channel that river, alike a memorial of Paradise and Babylon, heaven and hell.

ENROGEL, OR FOUNTAIN OF SILOAM.

ENROGEL, or Fountain of Siloam, is one of those fountains which, while possessing interest of themselves, is still more fruitful of sacred reminiscences. Setting aside conjecture as to its location, in common with the more respectable authorities, we suppose it to have been that pool, whose only waters, flowing at the base of Mount Moriah, gladdened Jerusalem with its murmuring ripple. The history and reminiscences of this sacred stream has been strangely interwoven, like a thread of silver, into the garments and ceremonial of the ancient priesthood. And now, though the top of Moriah, no longer crowned with the white wall and golden roof of the temple, has been idolatrously supplied by the mosque of St. Omar, and the worship of the Koran; still this brook, babbling at the mountain's base, runs free and clear, as when

"Siloa's brook did flow,
Fast by the oracles of God."

In the fearful desolation of the city, and the ruin which ensued on the rejection of Him who himself was both the oracle and the fountain, this whispering brook, exhaustless in its flow, murmured out from its

rocky covering; the only thing whose life-breathings found an echo amid the surrounding desolation. Lulled by the melodious murmur of its flow, the sound of which seemed to contain treasures of love, hope and melancholy, touching the vandalism of pagan hearts, repressed their thirst for blood. Its sound was the living lyre of nature; dreamy as night, brilliant as day, true as the heart, and simple as the untutored thought—which rolling out on the ear of the victor, repressed the work of destruction, and charmed away the serpent-like nature of his soul. Looking back to the period when Jerusalem, “encompassed” by a victorious foe, was doomed to destruction, we wonder why even heathen hearts did not relent in the work of indiscriminate carnage—why their vague dreams of shining exploits, of stirring destiny, of captor striving with captive, and then rising in strength and power, as the besieged lie dead at his feet, were not relented at the sight of so much sorrow. But then God hath reserved influences which can melt the heart, when the sight of blood and death leave us in a state of brutality and stupor. The lulling sound of the summer wave, striking in long and distant measures on the shore, the murmuring winds of autumn, sighing through the trees, or the still, soft ripple of the fountain, are at times

sufficient to revive the memory of better and purer days, and to repress the work of death. Nature's eloquence is not ordinarily addressed to reason, as the faculty which is to enlighten and disperse mysteries; but striking upon the heart, leads us to communion with God, whose presence amid his works, like the fanning of gentle zephyrs, stirs the inmost fibre of our souls. He wills that the majestic solitude, which, peopling with spirit forms and voices, shall, like the flow of "Siloa's brook," sound a living murmur, which will aid in subduing the unloved propensities of our nature, and whilst surprising us by the pleasing change, leaves us to wonder in the silence of nature, at the light and life he has shed upon our souls. From which we infer, that the breath of love and prayer is ordained to flow out from His wondrous works, to be continually inspired and heard, that man by listening to their voice, should be constantly subdued in love, and by their teaching participate in the ordering of his own destiny. Fountains in the East are well nigh as immutable as mountains. To them the inhabitants repair, as well from motives of necessity as piety; whilst modern travellers repair to them, at the season when the villagers coming to procure water, exhibit most pleasingly their personal peculiarities of dress and

manners. Not unfrequently, as in our churches, they can accurately determine, by the modesty of demeanor, the strength of piety in those who come to procure water. At times this inspection is as satisfactory and pleasing as that of the servant of Abraham, who meeting the modest and courteous Rebecca at the well, was immediately enamored of that beauty, which founded his solicitation for her union with his master. It was also at a well the Savior conversed with and estimated the character of the "woman of Samaria," and where meeting so wise and distinguished a stranger, she was made happily instrumental in bearing the tidings of the Redeemer's mission and presence to her neighbors. Whether we would approach any of these sacred fountains in the hope of beholding some distinguished visiter, or a poor damsel lamenting over the fragments of her jar, broken in the frequent scuffle to procure water, we should feel on our return, the trouble and toil of the visit amply repaid in the enjoyment of the increasing stock of wisdom. The memory of the bright, sunny days of youth, when

" Beside the *brook*,
With one sweet sister, and my all on earth,
A gleeful boy, our changeful course we took,
And woke the echos of the hills with mirth,"

Would again be ours, should more sacred associations

not disturb the natural revery. But to the Jew, what holy recollections, what saddening reflections, are awakened at the sight of this fountain, as it bubbles up from the base of the mountain on which stood the temple, the home of his fathers' hearts, and the pride and glory of the nation. The holy lessons learned by him, as in imagination he sat within its consecrated walls, could never be forgotten, though the light which once shone on Salem's temple tower, falls but faintly and sadly where "mockery sits" on sacred ground. To us there can be no place more sacred in our recollections, than the church where our first religious impressions were made and strengthened; which, though it rise not in stately grandeur, in the midst of a populous town or city, yet points its spire heavenward, from the trees that hold their strife with the mountain storm. There the wholesome instruction and pious counsel, received in communion with hearts unaccustomed to religious sophistries and hollow pretensions, shall not be forgotten; but visiting us in trial and in sorrow, with a chastening and holy influence, will impart super-human fortitude and heavenly consolation. From whose consecrated walls there ever seemed to ascend the fervent prayer, the sweet song, and swelling anthem, moving the soul in its hidden depths,

and bidding it give answer to the mysterious impulses within and around it. Yet how much more vivid and intense the memory, the love, the ancient Israelite bore for the temple and its splendid and incomparable service! Then, too, when we look back to that spiritual Siloam, that sacred fountain, which poured its healthful stream around the altar of our infant memories, we seem to feel that our spiritual blessings in the past, have been so wonderfully real, as to have accumulated others for the present. Not so the Jew; for him the visions of national glory, with the day-beams of his devotion, converging in the temple, have long since gone out; and the evening shadows, with their sombre faces, close round the land of his ancient joy. True, we hope the deep thunder-clouds of God's vengeance, having exhausted their treasured desolation, will now roll away into the distance, and send back their farewell signs in successive playful, hopeful flashes, which being less vivid, will give promise, as they expire, in trembling, effluent beauty, that the "outcasts" of Israel may again return to their worship, and to that land of beauty and grandeur, where nature speaks with her strong voice lifted high, declaring the works and wonders of the creator of all. Hitherto there appears to have been reserved to the Israelite, nothing but a succession of

sentiments, vain regrets, hallowed recollections, ideal enjoyments, hopes and despondency, until deeply obscured in the valley of shadows, he was seen no more on earth. For them we constantly supplicate the aversion of God's vengeance, and would fain pray that their future condition may be as peaceful and prosperous, as their former was grievous. Sympathizing as we do, with the wandering children of Jacob, as christians, we can but humbly hope they may soon have a national convocation around the heights of Zion, and hear again, as they recline at eventide on the slopes of Moriah, the murmuring ripple of the fount of Siloam, gushing out, clear and free, and beautiful as ever.

And when its waters gushing forth, shall but image that stream of gratitude and piety, which springing forth from the hearts of a redeemed people, shall be the instantaneous and solitary expression of their love; then Mount Moriah, like a promontory of love, combining with the shade of the valley, the sacred silence of which will leave the ear of the worshippers undisturbed by the sounds of earth, will be consecrated without priest or temple, as a spot from which redeemed spirits can wing their way to the horizon of a brighter world. Where, too, their children's children, having crossed the threshold of

Canaan with gladness and joy, will feel that gracious spirits linger over the mountain heights; that hallowed associations cluster around it; that here intellectual, political and moral freedom, finding an abiding place in the past, will send out their holy influences, to live forever in the future. A church was formerly erected over this pool, but it has now gone to ruin. A number of rude huts appear to hang on its rocky covering, behind which are sepulchral chambers, all forming the wretched abode of miserable Arabs. The living have cast out the dead, and in the sacrilegious occupation of these huts and tombs, have sought to perpetuate an immortality of wretchedness, by giving this miserable collection of tenements the enduring name of the pool which bursts forth in their midst. Many are its associated scenes, from which much moral instruction may be obtained. The "eighteen" souls upon whom the "tower in Siloam fell," of which mention is made by the Savior, and the moral instruction derived therefrom, should ever be impressed upon our minds. Though they were sinners, we also, bearing the same character, must expect a like punishment. And had we been dealt with according to our sins, according to the *iniquity* of our holy things, our blood had long ere this been mingled with our offerings. These

judgments, and others, should loudly call upon us to repent, as the only way to escape perishing; and so "*iniquity shall not be our ruin.*" But the pool and the temple, associated in the history of Israel, gives it sacred prominence. While ever a Jew shall turn with longing, toward his beloved temple, to "rest" with his fathers on the declivity of Moriah, this pool will be remembered.

FOUNTAIN OF ELISHA.

One day while visiting the house of a friend, in a most beautiful country neighborhood, wearied with the confinement of the house, I took my Bible from my port-manteau, and strolled out alone to enjoy the delightful scenery of his valley home. Wending my way amid sweet odors, and far off sounds, which came mingling with the breeze which breathed gently around me, I hastened to the border of the remnant of a wide old wood, where was presented to the eye a scene of exquisite beauty. Underneath the spreading branches of a large tree, and opening out upon a rich tract of cultivated country, lay a little spot of mossy and carpet-like verdure.

A low bank of earth spread with the same delicate covering, rested against its huge base. Flowering vines trailed to the ground from the intermingling boughs of neighboring trees, and with their lighter and more graceful trunks, formed long avenues, leading away into the depths of the woodland, till the eye was lost in the dimness. Before it, rolled on a shining river, and within the view were distant mountains, green fields, groves of trees, rural homes,

and the confines of a beautiful village. All nature appeared new and beautiful, whilst the sudden transition from the bustle and conversation of the mansion, seemed to rob me of the power of expression, and I remained passive and silent. Yet, whilst gazing on trees of singular foliage, and flowers of new hues, or upon the same kind and hue, to which I was accustomed. I seemed irresistably led back to the days of happiness and hope. How delightedly I traced the windings of the stream, till distance, or some intervening object, hid it from my view. How eagerly my eyes ran up to the summit of the hill; how familiarly it peered into the thicket! how my heart thrilled at the ripple of the wave, and echoed back the song of the bird! The sun had sunk behind the shadow of the foliage at the western point of the landscape, and as I sat down by the trunk of an old tree, with the open Bible in my hand, a single gleam struggled through and glanced horizontally upon the open page of the Holy Word. There might have been a revelation in that ray, for it fell gently on the page, which speaks of the waters in the fountain of Elisha, becoming "*naught and the ground barren.*" We are certain, never did a verse of Holy writ, look so beautiful, as when the flickering sun ray trembled on the page. We would not

wish to awaken superstition, or an unhealthy sentimentality, which would darken beauty by the shadow of its smiles. In referring to this incident, we would but wish to express, there is nothing insignificant in all the universe, to him who has faith in the work and wisdom of God. The slightest incident, if the heart pulsates, 'neath the breathing of the spirit, may be changed into a minister of wisdom, mercy, and reconciliation. All will aid us in visiting the past, in endeavoring to penetrate that which has been produced; what tributes have imparted to the stream that run clear or turbid? what is now pouring into them, and what their course will probably be. Poetry and the beautiful is not the only language used by these occasional, though mysterious beamings of the sun. They speak in words of lofty meaning; when the heart appears even broken, by the fierce contest of the heavenly with the earthly, but like the smile of Jesus at the opened sepulchre, shine like a holy light burning clear and pure. These are prophecies which we ought not to mistake for dreams, and creations, which, while they please, are at least more serviceable, than the gem islands thought to have been found, which when examined by the navigator, are seen to be but clouds and mists, suspended by the winds and painted by the sun beams. Inatten-

tion to passing events, which while it shows us to be blind to the beautiful hand-writing of God all around us, prevents our hearing but few strains of Nature's everlasting hymn, that blends in harmony all sounds from the breathing of the growing flower, to the rushing and wheeling of stupendous worlds. As we wake from this criminal indifference, we look with a clearer vision upon all the works of God, as they rise from simplicity to sublimity. Thus, in the contemplation of the page on which the sun beam lingered, the natural ray, as if having the power to attract, drew spiritual instruction from the familiar chapter, and awakened a lively sense of that never failing spell, which opening the human heart, unfolds its infinite treasures, and reveals the actual of our affections. The brilliant radiance of the ascension of Elijah, falling with his mantle upon the shoulders of his successor, animated him with a new being, and while inspiring reverence taught the sons of the prophets to exclaim, "the spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha." The city of Jericho was pleasant, but the water was scarce and the ground poor; two circumstances which would have forever retarded its growth. The impatient inhabitants, ambitious perhaps, to rival other places, in wealth and importance, solicited the aid of the Holy Seer to resuscitate the

waters. For the promotion of the Divine honor, and to inspire respect for the power and authority of Him, who not only bestows, but sanctifies mercies already received; the Prophet, connecting a natural agent, with the communication of Divine power, healed the waters. Reading this event, under the circumstances before described, I seemed instinctively to cast my eyes around for the site of the city which stood hard by the fountain, whose walls fell down at the shout of Israel, and where was afterward a school of the prophets, which our Lord repeatedly honored with his presence. It is probable, the more modern city of the Romans, the one not encompassed by the Israelites, was built at the foot of the hill, distant from the fountain, as would seem to be indicated by the ruins of aqueducts, which still remain. But even these are so scarce, as will not admit of a satisfactory conjecture, as to the precise location of the ancient city. Having been employed or removed in the successive reconstruction of the city out of the former ruins, thus mutilating, reducing and transporting them. "Satisfied," says Dr. Durbin "with the rapid survey of the scene before us, we descended the mountain, bore north-east across the plains, and in forty minutes pitched our tents on the edge of the flourishing forest of small trees and shrubs

close by the clear and rapid stream of Ain es Sultan, or fountain of Elisha, which boiled up from the limestone rocks, two hundred yards above us. It is one of the most copious springs I have ever seen, supplying volumes of sweet water, which runs off through the plain, at first in a stream twenty feet wide, and from eighteen inches to two feet deep, and afterwards divides into many little rivulets, which irrigate and fertilize only a small portion of the vast plain."

But that which we most desire to see, in an excursion to this fountain, that which invests it with sacred importance, the "School of the Prophets," the unpretending nursery of learning and piety, in which were trained the successive prophets of Israel, who more than writing their names on "fields of air,"

"Trode on the chambers of the sky;
E'en read the stars, and grasped the flame,
That quivers round the Throne on high,"

Now no more greets the expectant gaze. But why lament, when departed greatness, the illumination of genius, and the ardor of piety, withers and dies? "The prophets, do they live forever?" "Your fathers, where are they?" They are gone! Their virtues but faintly gleaming in the dim twilight of a sinful world, have accompanied the celestial charriot, and shone with increasing brilliancy as it rolled

higher and higher amid the concave heavens. Their memory, like that of Elijah and Elisha, shall never die. "They rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." For he who, like Elisha, casts *salt* into the waters, becomes a *savor* of grace to the hearts of men, shall be kept in perpetual remembrance by the works he hath wrought. Their work shall endure forever. Reverent were the seers of the olden Jewish time, as they looked upon the stars, and read lessons of hope and fear from the mystic character of the illuminated page. Their mouth was the oracle, and men marvelled as they heard its utterances. Let us, however, remember whilst we behold the woods and the fountains, the depths of the ocean and the realms of air, wrought into seeming life by the beauty and grace of the Divine Spirit, our admiration of them is another feeling than that of worship for the true God, with the children of the Patriarchs in the prophetic rites of the law, or of christianity, which descending from heaven, made luminous the path of christian duty.

FOUNTAIN OF THE APOSTLES.

THERE is but one thing which discourages the traveller in visiting the scenes of our Savior's presence and ministry. This is the doubt and mystery in which the precise location of these places is obscured; often, when his judgment and history would fix to his own satisfaction the location of some sacred spot, an officious and unclerical looking ecclesiastic, will confidently determine the object of our search, and evince surprise at our want of devotion, as though we ought to venerate that which we believe to be fiction. This but teaches us anew, that even the spirit of enquiry, has many departments to consult, and can only be guided by science and history, in exploring that which is purely ideal. For then only, we shall perceive the capability of facts to set aside, and even transcend fictions in the matter of gratifying wonder, or indulging the passion for the grand and the sublime. Fact is more wonderful, more satisfying than fiction. As what God has produced, is far more grand than what man can invent. Marvels before which we stand appalled, which make us feel our littleness, and yet exalt us, by drawing

upon and increasing the mightiest energies of thought, lifting up our whole being, as we realize the possession of those capacities by which we circle worlds, comprehend the motions of systems, and the character of Him whom we confess and adore is the work of truth, and not of fiction.

The study of truth has driven superstition from her thrones, and triumphantly answered her mythological books of magic power. Whilst the ideal must be confessed, and her beauty be admired, as invested in gorgeous robes of splendor, she walks abroad, enshrouded in mystery, until the music of her enchanting tales and songs vibrate in the breast and fills the soul with terror and ecstasy. Yet, truth is that which can make all bright, and whilst awakening us to the realization of beauty and bloom around us, gives an eternal reality to that existence which unfolds an eternity in the bosom of hope. The province of superstition and imagination, is to conceal truth, to reveal which, makes the latter powerful in its loftiest elevations, as the shadow of the oak is more majestic, as the tree towers to the heavens and spreads out its branches. This is that which shows why a soul is more precious than a retinue of worlds, and as preached by Christ and his Apostles, exhibited the plan of our redemption, and dissolved the

vapory falsehoods that had hidden man's highest glory. To know as God knows, to love as he loves, is the effect of christianity, which is the great initiator in the paths of truth. As "truth is the view which God takes of things," and imparts to our vision, abiding strength, so, to look as he looks, is to behold beauty, grandeur and glory, transcending romance, and eclipsing all fiction. As Christ and his Apostles stood among men, and amid the show of their age, spake with authority, the authority of truth, equity and love; felt and acted in all the relations of life, it becomes our imperative duty to listen to their instructions. Receiving their teachings, and transformed by their doctrine, we shall find to whatever part of the universe we turn, the light of truth will shine, and reveal what He has written in characters of love. It will show us beauty everywhere. It will make a rainbow of even human tears, and throw a smile on the stern features of death. Thus, the Apostles at the beginning, and the faithful preacher now, are needed, to aid humanity as it grapples grimly and doubtfully, with the falsehood of life. We need them, to rise, and preach, and sing, and toil, to show us the truth, to strip off the cerements of error, to call us to duty, to encourage our hopes, to deliver us from our wrongs, to nerve us

to our labor, and to the accomplishment of our destiny. Truth is ever needed, which, whether to direct us in the search of a "sacred fountain," or of the "well-spring" of eternal joy, comes in such warm sweet, and stirring accents, as cheers the desolate and mourning, and breathes upon the ear of sympathy, the whisperings of unchanging complacency.

Returning from this seeming digression, we may remark, that the fountain at which the Apostles, the *truth*-bearing messengers of Jesus refreshed themselves, is by the road side, near the ancient village of Bethany, and in sight of which is shown the residence of the redeemed and grateful Mary Magdalene. The location of this fountain, near Bethany, is of itself, sufficient to impart interest to the place, and make it even unseen to us, a most sacred memorial, sweet indeed are the associations which cluster around the village and fountain. Mary Magdalene and the Apostles, Lazarus and "the sisters," Christ and the power of his weeping, come up to our recollections, and whilst inspiring love for their memory, teaches us, as we gaze upon the sparkling fountain which laves at our feet, to look with a bright philosophy on the Providences of Heaven. From the vicinity of this fountain, the excited multitude accompanied the Savior; "spreading their

garments" in the way, whilst songs, rejoicings and hosannahs made the hills and olive groves re-echo with their mighty voices. The road from Jerusalem winding around the base of the hill to the East, and running near the fountain, is still shown, as that on which the Saviour trod at sunset, on his way from Jerusalem, to rest with his friends at Bethany; and in the morning on his return to warn and instruct the devoted city. Near this, was the grave, at which "Mary and Martha" wept for a departed brother, subsequently raised by the power of Jesus, and here delivering his last commission to his disciples, the Redeemer, wrapped in the thin drapery of a cloud, and attended by a convoy of angels, passed away into his natal heaven. The Divine visitation has fallen as heavily on Bethany as on Jerusalem. "The soil is swept from the hills around her, once clad in verdure, but now rock paved and desolate; and the pleasant villages of Bethpage and Bethany have dwindled into a miserable hamlet, of some twenty stone huts, and a few black tents, inhabited by as many families of swarthy Arabs, who flock around you, and urge you to drink water from their coarse earthen jars, in the hope of obtaining money, which they indeed demand before the refreshing draught blesses your lips." (Dr. Durbin.) Few things remain

unchanged; the form of the everlasting hills, the *fountain of the Apostles*, and the generous and beneficent olive-tree, which has adorned the hill-side from time immemorial.

FOUNTAIN OF JEZREEL.

THE accession, reign, and decease of a monarch, are deemed to be events of great importance, and worthy of serious attention. Liberal as are the sentiments of those who, reared to respect a popular government, have no sympathy with aristocratic orders, still such a circumstance, affecting, as it often does, the political destiny of a nation, can but be important. Under whatever form a state is controlled, that government, whilst sustained, however obnoxious, is the only "support" and "ornament of virtue's cause." Despite the opinion of him who, to gratify an unhallowed ambition, advocated agrarianism, the people, in olden time, looked upon the governor as coming from God, and him as guilty of the greatest crime, who would make use of the

natural power of the people, for the purpose of destruction and convulsion. And to them, none were to be so much pitied, as they who supposed themselves capable, by the tricks of an empty and vain politics, of leading the people entirely according to their own selfish purposes and desires. With no nation was this feeling more fully developed than that of Israel. Born the natural inheritors of a clime, than which sun never shone on any more brightly, nor fruits grew with such exuberance, they were little inclined to sympathize with any movement, having a tendency to interrupt the harmony of such delicious quietude. With them the element of revolution could not be found. The novelty of change was supposed not to compensate for the blessing of established rule. Whilst under the government of the Judges, they may have occasionally forgotten the meaning of those revelations which gleamed on the mystic and oracular jewelry of the High Priest's breast-plate. Yet all that was hallowed in religion, sacred in memory, or powerful in dignity, was afterwards supposed to centre in, and emanate from him, on whose head had been poured the oil of anointing. In politics and literature, other nations appear to have been governed by that strange passion which leads us to fasten upon every

new and great addition to our inheritance; as if that alone were more worthy of attention than the whole of our former possessions; or pursuing these with restless avidity, forget in their admiration everything beside, and become blind to all but one point. Yet sad experience has taught them, when the ferment of extravagance subsided, and things at last found their level, that imperfections and tyranny in governmental rule, when without attempting to conceal the fact, new things took their place among the old.

The Jew's heart taught him, he owed the perfection of his virtues, and the purity of his loveliness, to the knowledge received from the light of his nation's sanctuary and laws. It was as the mingling of the realities and dreams of life together. It was a blending of the rural melodies of home, with the heart and joy of the nation. The power to charm, to soothe and to satisfy, like gems and flowers which reflect the light of a spring landscape, seemed only to come from the mysterious union of the spiritual sense with the material power of the nation. The patriotism of the Jew was a sweet and pure philosophy, which, separated from all that was false, was made applicable to the purposes of life, and practical by its active energies. It was a kind of invisible chain, which, while it bound him to earth, ascended

up to the immaculate and eternal, permitting him to enjoy dreams of happiness, pure as the moon-lit palace of the frost-king, and rich as the cloud-wrought drapery of the summer sunset of his lovely clime. Contrasted with the patriotism of Sparta and Rome, in their boasted days of glory, that of the Jew is as eminently superior, as the source from whence it sprung. The transition from the feeling of Grecian patriotism, to that of the Jew, would have been like the revelation of truth made to the mind of the believing Areopagite, when he heard the eloquent Apostle proclaim—"The God that made the world and all things therein, is not worshipped in temples made with hands." The which revelation seemed like peering the mind from a long night of immensity of darkness and silence, and throwing it through wreathing mists of glory, to ride with the spheres, on their nicely ordered round of changing seasons, to listen to that wondrous music, whose chords are so skilfully attuned, that it might be deemed a chorus of the Seraphim.

Christianity has ever been the nursery of freedom and patriotism. The history of a pure christianity, is but the history of men struggling against every kind of oppression and wrong. It is this feeling which makes it no delight for the christian to dwell

on deeds of wickedness, but prompts a complacency for the good and the mighty; which has placed him with the multitude, as with a single arm, only in their deeds of perilous enterprise, and their struggles for right and truth, which makes him sing with the Israelites, their song of deliverance; or go to Ilium, with the princely avengers of the wrongs of Atrides, and in imagination to re-enact, with the steel-clad knight, the scenes of battle for the tombs of Palestine. Such was the feeling which animated the youthful shepherd-king to engage the armies of the murderous Saul; which prompted him to lay low the proud defier of the armies of Israel; and which bound to his fortunes and his cause, the strong-armed warriors of the soil.

With the deeds and fortunes of Saul this fountain is in singular association. From hence, sad and forsaken of God, he had, under cover of the night, crossed the deep valley of Jezreel, northward to the little Hermon, which he scaled, and descended to visit the witch of Endor, through whom he obtained the terrible interview with the departed Samuel, who said to him—"To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me." Here he and Jonathan had encamped on the night before the fatal battle, in which they fell down slain, on a neighboring mountain.

Throughout the entire valley, extending from the Jordan on the east, to the Mediterranean on the west, and from the mountains of Samaria on the south, to those of Nazareth on the north, there is scarce connected one pleasing association, recalling little else than stories of ambition, avarice, cruelty, revenge and war. "Around this fountain," says Dr Durbin, "have encamped the armies which have contended for Palestine, from the time of Gideon to that of the crusaders; and all over the great plain, from Bethshan on the banks of the Jordan, where the Philistines exposed the headless body of Saul, to the sacred river of Kishon, which swept the host of Sisera, along the base of Mount Carmel, into the Mediterranean, have the hosts of Asia, Africa, and Europe, for the last three thousand years, pitched their tents, and unfurled their banners in battle." The Assyrian, the Persian, the Egyptian, the Saracen, the Turk, the Arab, the Druse, the Crusader, and the Frenchman, each in his turn have drawn their sword, and bathed it in blood on the battle-field of nations. A fountain which, while pouring out the sparkling beverage of life, has also been the receptacle of the life-blood of slaughtered thousands, will forever flow as an emblem of the blending of happiness and wo, life and death.

FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN.

THE sun had just gone down, but his footprints yet lay on the clouds of his pathway, as beautiful and as glorious as the memories that remain when the noble and the good have passed beyond our mortal vision. A soft shadow was stealing over tree and river, as twilight gathered around. The warm tints of the decaying leaf, the blue of the atmosphere, and the bending sky, were melting into its sombre hue. The first chills of early autumn were on the landscape, and the foliage had already been stricken by the hand that throws beauty over decay, yet the stars came out one by one, and the heavens grew bright. I had watched the parting sun rays, with the seemingly unconscious hope, that I might track their viewless flight, until they tremulously vanished amidst the calm of the serenest skies, when a silent tear coursed over my cheek at the failure of my efforts. A long train of mournful reflections came rooping over my mind; and as the twi-light deepened the shadows fell heavily on my spirit, whilst the stars growing more distinct and beautiful, seemed to chain me to the gaze, while lacking the power to disperse

the gloom of my mind. It was an hour when man leans not on life; when life is the shadow and eternity the real; and when the cares and toils which fill up the day, dwindle into their own insignificance, in the presence of the thoughts that wander on the star-beam, and traverse the hushed and holy air. An hour when the wildest throbbing of feeling becalmed before the intellect, which, then majestic and unmoved, looked down on the tumultuous throbings of the heart. Sitting on a rural seat in the yard of my humble home, I seemed to sympathize with nought, save the stars, whose very brilliance threatened to extinguish their lustre, and leave the night in darkness. My breathing was hushed and still, and no sound was heard, save the shiver of the willow, as the light breeze wafted its rustle to the ear of the passing pedestrian, whose foot-falls fell invitingly on the hard pavement, occasionally the night wind murmured among the trees with a stronger sway, which caused the rustling leaves to interrupt my sacred communion with Nature, and imparted the momentary desire to leave my retreat. Following these impulses, I unconsciously strayed to a spot on the suburbs of the town, associated with all that was dear of hopeful, youthful memories. Here, at early morn, I had engaged in the free wild sports of boy-

hood, when neither care nor sorrow disturbed the uninterrupted harmony of my joys. How changed was I! How changed the place! Scarce ten years had passed since the merry laugh of infancy echoed long and loud, through the wood which skirted the common. Here the skies seemed to glow with the same soft, mellow brightness, which inspired the feeling of loneliness, when sitting under the willow. I paused on reaching the retreat, when impressed with the vivid recollections of earlier years, and the beauty of the solitude and the scene, sank down upon a little elevated knoll. I had been seated here but a few minutes, when looking up, I saw a man reeling to and fro, in the direction of a small house, which stood farther out on the common. It required but the glance to see he was in a state of bestial intoxication. As he stumbled on toward the door, I instinctively rose and walked slowly after, keeping at such distance, that my foot-falls should not attract his attention. The door was placed at the end of the building, so that making a diversion to the right, I approached the house, at an angle from the line of his advance, and toward a window, through which occasional gleams of light, were but faintly seen. Upon arriving at the entrance he raised his clenched fist, and struck the door with such violence, as well

nigh severed it from the hinges, muttering in loud, though indistinct syllables, a horrible imprecation on his wife. My first impulse was, to go to the door and see that no further insult or violence were offered. Recollecting the probable imprudence and danger of the attempt, I walked direct to the window, through which, I had a view of all that passed within. The fiend, as I supposed him to be, staggered toward the hearth, at which his wife was sitting, over a few smoking embers, which she occasionally stirred, in the hope of boiling a few potatoes for her evening meal. Alarmed by the threat of her husband, she sprang from the fireside, and addressing him by name exclaimed, "Oh do not kill me, for heaven's sake do not kill me!" and then ran to the opposite side of the room. Her husband, (for such I now knew him to be,) stood with his glaring bloodshot eyes fixed upon her, for the moment, whilst his wife in great fear, partially concealed herself behind an old broken cupboard. Then raising a chair, hurling it around his head, and vociferating a dreadful oath, my ear instinctively waited to catch the sound of the maimed or lifeless body of his wife falling upon the floor. When my eye glanced toward the wall from which she hastily jerked down a picture, when kissing it, she ran toward her husband, and falling at his feet

with tears exclaimed, "for the sake of our holy mother, the blessed Virgin Mary, spare my life." Instinctively, the arm of the drunken man lowered, when the chair fell down with a crash upon the floor. Standing mute for the moment, he staggered heavily over the floor, and threw himself down in the chimney corner. Altogether, it was a scene difficult to be described. The drunken, murderous, phrenzied husband; the alarmed, weeping and sorrow stricken wife, pressing to her heart the picture of the Virgin Mary, by an appeal to whom, her life had been spared, formed a scene for a painter, and one of the most graphic occurrences I have ever beheld. I returned home silent and thoughtful, without giving intimation to any, what I had witnessed. The next morning, I accidentally picked up a book of travel, when turning over the pages, I noticed a sketch of the scenery and situation of the "*Fountain of the Virgin*," upon which I involuntarily exclaimed, I too, have seen the *Fountain of the Virgin* in those tears which flowed from the eyes of the poor woman, last night, which I believed to have been equally efficient in the preservation from danger, as that of the Virgin itself. Though certainly not as potent as the plea of the condemned sinner, who, in shrinking behind the cross, exclaims,

“ ’Tis just the sentence should take place,
’Tis just, but O ! thy Son has died.”

This memorable fountain is just without the north-west portion of the present town of Nazareth. All the inhabitants, as in former days, come here to procure water, and travellers say it is always thronged as you approach it.

Though the stream runs steadily, it is yet slow, so that maidens collect and wait for their turn, or else engage in a most “unmaidenly contest,” as to who shall first get water. The large marble trough which holds the water, is supposed to have been a sarcophagus.

It is very probable that the mother of our blessed Lord, in the days of her youth, repaired to this fountain with the damsels of the village, to procure water, distinguished here as elsewhere, by the purity of her manners, and the modesty of her demeanor.

To us, the occurrence narrated, and the *fountain of the Virgin*, are inseparably connected. Hallowed by the presence of Christ, and of Mary, and endeared to all by these pious recollections, this “fountain” can never be torn from the heart and mind of the christian.



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Engraved by W. G. S. from a sketch by J. P. S. in the collection of the British Museum.

GALILEE—OR SEA OF TIBERIAS.

BRIGHT are the rays of the beaming sun, soft and clear are the notes of the feathered songsters, echoing from the forest grove. Hope smiles in every eye, and joy beams bright in every heart. Glittering pearls are seen sparkling on the bosom of the smooth sea; while nature, as if about to assume her richest garb, sent forth from every hill and vale, a tribute of praise to the high and lofty One. Such, we are informed by a recent tourist, was the character of the morn on which his eyes first caught a view of the bright and gently undulating surface of the lake of Genessareth.

Somchow, we always associate the idea of an eternity of happiness with this sea, so fruitful of holy and pleasing reminiscences. Often when awake, in the calm and stillness of the midnight hour, this sacred sea moves on in undisturbed repose before our imagination, with scarce a ripple on its surface. Veiled in the deep and dark obscurity, concealed in the darkness from every mortal eye, this inland ocean of unuttered beauty, lies spread before us, until its swelling waves of sympathy and of love, one

after another, in quick succession, burst upon our enraptured gaze. And then, as we seek to wander around its silent shore, our feet unconsciously stray to the edge of the water, whilst the eye searches amid the darkness, for that Form, which in ancient days walked over its shining billows. How often we have wished for some aerial car, which, swift as thought, would convey us to its delightful shore, just where the dripping branches of the fig-trees, depending over some projecting rock, were enveloped in a slight fringe of spray, thrown against them by the rippling of the silver wave? When blessed in its repose and shelter, we would pray to remain unknown to men; where none might envy us as the fortunate possessor of this sacred retreat, and where, visited only by the birds of the lake, the soft south wind and sunshine could only pierce our hiding amid trees and water. These hopes, though fond, are vain only in the impossibility of their realization. Yet the time may come in which we shall look back with pleasure to the hallowed memories of these sleepless hours, with feelings of transport and ecstasy, in the actual contemplation of that which we had hoped to enjoy. How singularly interesting and exciting are all the event's which mark the Savior's pilgrimage! Whether we view him sitting by the

humble mechanic, at the table of the peasant, or stopping at some lowly inn, hungry, weary and slumbrous like other men, he startles us as much by his words as by his actions and his destiny. From the time when the star arose on the manger where he lay cradled, and where as a babe, sages bent over him in reverent worship, until the radiant heavens received him to glory, his every act alike proclaims him Creator and Redeemer. A strange, unearthly influence surrounded him; a light never before seen flashed from his eye, and drew the crowds by which he was ever surrounded. Yet now, as we seem to hear the words which fell from his lips, and the uttering of those new truths, which startled the soul of man, like a trumpet call, we cease to be surprised. No wonder, whether sitting by the way-side, where the dust of the carriage wheels of the proud man passing by, was perchance cast over his weary limbs, or where, assuming the more elevated character of his mission, he preached on the *mountain* side, the multitude still hung on his lips, and the people thronged about him.

We have often wished to call up the moving pathos of his discourses, in which simplicity was powerful, and where fire and purity combined, like light and transparency in a diamond. What sensa-

tions were produced on the multitude of minds around him, by the tones and ardor and accent of his inexhaustible effusions! There would be the sense of sadness, recurring like the unexpected notes at the end of an air; caressing words, which seemed to fan the brow, like the breath of a fond mother bending over her child; a melodious lulling of half-whispered words, and hushed though thrilling sentences, which wrapped his auditory in light and murmurs; which falling upon the still deep of the soul, led them by soft and soothing syllables to the repose of love. Unencumbered in his delivery, by the rules of the rhetoricians, the unveiled soul stood forth upon his lips, so that in the announcement of his heart-breathed words, nothing would evaporate, as in the slow and dull transition of the feeling to the word on the lips of an ordinary teacher. Rising from the impassioned depths of the concealed divinity, his speech woke itself to life and power, and falling in exuberant beauty from his lips, was adored and admired ere consciously expressed. The modern name of this lake, which is probably a corruption of the ancient name Chinnereth, sounds harsh and unmusical, and is one, of which we are not much enamored. Its breadth, according to Josephus, from East to West, is about six, and the length from

North to South, full eighteen miles. The country around it, anciently fruitful and well cultivated, spread populous cities around its pure and wholesome waters, even down to the smooth gravel washed by its silent waves. Not distant from this sea was the birth place of Jesus, and where resigned to the obedience and charm of his childhood years, he kept away from the dissipating influences of earth, and whilst in the midst of a busy population, wrapped himself in silence, solitude and reserve, until the commencement of his public ministry ; where, when unoccupied in the duties of his reputed father's trade, he would retire to meditate beneath the half-stripped trees of the garden, where the shade of the vine-leaves and the rays of the sun played and chased each other alternately over his benignant face. And from Gallilee as a centre, and the place of his stated abode, the Savior practically illustrated that glorious system of pastoral theology, which showed that the shepherd's crook could be used with a Bishop's skill. From place to place, from cottage to cottage, to the abode of wretchedness and spiritual destitution, he went on his mission of love, teaching the burdened spirit to repose upon himself, and directing the sin-sick soul to the balm in Gilead, and the physician there, for health and eternal life. On

the shore of this lake, that notable miracle, the feeding of five thousand was enacted. From the city, the hamlet, the farm house, and the hovel, they had come, bringing on litters the sick, whilst the blind groping their toilsome way, by the sound of rushing footsteps, endeavored to get near the vessel that wafted Jesus of Nazareth around the shore. Pain and weariness were forgotten in the deep anxiety to be restored by the man of fame and wonder. A poor man without family, property, or education, he nevertheless claims to have the power to forgive sins and heal the sick. Half incredulous, yet having heard his miracles attested, they watch the progress of that frail bark, as though it carried their destiny. The waves scarcely stirred by the summer winds, bears but slowly over the sunlit wave, the weary Son of Mary. As he casts his eye over the broad bosom of the sea, the distant beach is crowded with men and women, who, while watching the progress of the vessel, make the shore echo with their solicitations and prayers. His heart swelled at the sight, and as the vessel touched the strand, his more than placid voice, lifted up above the murmur of the waves, poured forth such unutterable truths, that hours flew unconsciously by; as with upturned faces, they drank in the messages of love and kindness.

As night began to come down on the sea, the last beam of expiring day fell upon nothing, save the multitude betokening life, amid the universal desolation. These following him from afar, as if involuntarily attracted by some superior principle, coming to a consciousness of their situation, found themselves destitute of bread. The Disciples filled with tender sympathy, besought Jesus to send them away to procure sustenance and lodging for the night. Not so could He do, whose great office, was to feed the hungry, and comfort the distressed. The Savior's Omniscient eye, saw a lad, in the midst of the multitude, on whom were found "five barley loaves and a few small fishes," taking them, having given thanks, he broke them before the people, with which the multitude were fed, without the least diminution of the lad's supply. Then, methinks, as the benediction or dismissal fell from his lips, the encompassing heavens bent nearer his brow, whilst the wild scene around them, was illumed in greater brilliancy by the blaze of the setting sun. The scene is now changed. The hum of the subdued voices of the far parting multitude have long since died away, whilst He, who a few brief hours gone by, was surrounded by hundreds, was now solitary and alone. The moan of the sea, now being lashed into a tempest, and the

solitude of the desert scene, were strangely in keeping with the sadness which oppressed his soul. The shadows of night, and now darker than the forebodings that gather around his spirit, induce him to turn his footsteps towards a lonely mountain to pray. Where kneeling under the thickening clouds, in sweet submission and tender sympathy, he kept hallowed interview with his Father in heaven. Now rising from prayer, he slowly and thoughtfully retraced his steps to the shore. Dark thunder clouds were hovering over its bosom; the wind sweeping by, in angry gusts, lashed it into fury; while the frail bark struggled for life amid the angry billows. By the flashes, which ever and anon rent the gloom, the plunging vessel was seen dividing the waves, as the strong wind hurried it along the distracted waters. Though the scene was terrible, the Savior calmly and serenely stepped upon the billows, and moved out upon the watery waste, as it rolled and crumbled at his feet. Proceeding toward the vessel, the Disciples with straining eyes watch the fast approaching spectral form, and start back in greater dread than at the sound of the tempest. Yet no sooner than the expression, "it is I, be not afraid," had fallen upon their ears, from the well known accent of the Redeemer's voice, than fear and horror gave way to the wildest joy.

“ So still thy white robes fell—no breath of air,
“ Within their long and slumbrous folds had sway,

* * * * *

“ Dark were the heavens above the Savior; dark
“ The gulf’s Deliverer! round the straining bark,
“ But thou! o’er all thine aspect and array
“ Was poured one stream, of pale broad silvery light.
“ Thou wert the single star of that all-shrouding night.”

This sea was subsequently the place to which our Lord resorted after his resurrection, and by whose shore the Apostles found “fire and coals and fish laid thereon, and bread.” Calling most, if not all of his ministers from Galilee, it was but natural they should frequently return to, and labor in the country of their birth. Our Lord, and through him, the Apostles were but complimented by the expression of his adversary, the dying Julian, who being cut off from prosecuting his purposes against christianity exclaimed in the hour of death, *Vicisti Galilee! thou hast conquered, O Galilean!* The Savior’s feet having pressed upon the bosom of this inland sea, immortal will be the echo of its sounding surge.

GAD—A RIVER.

It is not unfrequently observed, that names and places are used interchangeably by the inspired authors. If in the name of an individual, we have sometimes the sir-name, and at others, his name coupled with the town of his birth, or some distinguished action or occurrence of his life. This does not make the inspired record more obscure, but introduces a great variety of pleasing reminiscences, which can but be interesting to the student of Bible localities. How tender and pleasing are these associations! The name of David inseparably connected with the city of Bethlehem, would doubtless awaken in the mind of the "Shepherd King" many of the most holy and tender recollections. Here lived his revered parents; here was his natal hour; here was the theatre of his boyhood sports; and on its moon-lit hills he watched his father's flocks, when sent for to be anointed king of the nation. The same feeling that afterwards prompted the psalmist to exclaim—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember not Jerusalem above my chief

joy," with but little abbreviation in thought or feeling, could have been applied to Bethlehem, the city of Christ and David. With what feelings of unspeakable and, at times, melancholy pleasure, after a long absence, do we view the scenes and associations of our earlier years? The interminable vista of trees, which surround the natal village; the meadows and winding brooks; the side-walks which echoed the tramp of our noisy infant feet; and the church, in which were heard the well remembered tones of the revered minister's voice, all seem holy and sacred as when its tones, in measured melody, fell upon our ears in days forever gone. Amid such scenes the cares and sorrows of the world are forgotten. Affections which have long lain dormant, are awakened to new life. We begin to feel and sympathise with those in this humble and cheerful sphere, and almost repine that our lot had not been cast forever with them. If these reminiscences are so strong, how pleasant to be associated with that which is ever dear and lovely, and thus have our name, like the ivy and the oak, inseparably transmitted to posterity?

The river of which we now propose to write, is supposed to have been the same with the Arnon, which, rising in the mountains of Gilead, east of

Jordan, flowing first toward the south, and then toward the west, empties into the eastern side of the Dead Sea. After the Ammonites had been dispossessed of the country on the east of the Jordan, by the Amorites, this river was the division between the latter people and the Moabites; and later still, after the Israelites had conquered the country of the Amorites, the Arnon was the boundary between the tribe of Reuben and the land of Moab. It is called the river of Gad, (2 Sam, xxiv: 5; 2 Kings, x: 33;) being the eastern boundary of that tribe. The interchangeable use of the names, Gad and Arnon, in the mind of him conversant with sacred history, may induce the remembrance of the eventful history of one of the tribes of Israel, in connection with the unfortunate and criminal origin of the Ammonites and Moabites. It would appear from the book of Judges, that the country east of Jordan, from the river Jabbok, as far south as the river Gad, was the land of the Ammonites; yet it is certain that the southern portion, toward the Arnon, was formerly inhabited by the Moabites. This tract of country they still continued to possess, after being dispossessed of the Jordan by the Amorites. The Moabites possessed the country north of the Arnon, as also a tract south of that river, between Edom

to the west, and Midian to the south and east. This latter portion they held after being stripped of the former possessions by Sihon, king of the Amorites. From the prophecies recorded against this people, it would seem that they were wicked to an unpardonable degree, proving that the iniquities of a progenitor may be entailed upon all who may come after. The melancholy fate of Sodom will be forever associated with the people of Ammon and Moab. The simple narrative which details their origin, with no other adornment than the truth itself, cannot prove less interesting to the reader than either poetry or romance; for it is one of those events in which truth is "stranger than fiction."

But recently the history of these interesting tribes was awakened in my mind, by a jocose and somewhat singular observation, made by one whose friendship and minute acquaintance with scripture geography we highly appreciate. We were on a pleasant excursion to a beautiful mountain elevation, the scene of a wonderful and appalling catastrophe, the memory of which throws a deep melancholy over the retired mountain height. We were winding our way among the bases of high mountains, springing up from the level on which we stood, and burying their lofty peaks in the clouds, which hung in dark

and heavy masses above them. The mist, thinner than the dense clouds that filled the upper air, was curling upward and downward along the lower levels of the many hill sides, in wreaths of fantastic shapes, displaying in succession a series of the most picturesque landscapes. In the midst of the general admiration excited by this scene of varied beauty we became aware of our near approach to a point, which we had been told, at our last stopping place, we should find one of the most interesting in our whole journey. The dark hill-sides, bounding our view on either hand, were deeply indented with the paths that many mighty avalanches had traversed. We had come to a sudden turn among the hills, and found ourselves entering a broad circular valley, at the base of the wide mountain range, which rose amphitheatrically all around us, as far as the eye could reach. At the foot of the highest and most corrugated of the hills, my friend pointed out a spot where history and tradition had fixed the enactment of a most fearful and bloody tragedy, as preparatory to the commencement of a series of most deplorable depredations upon occasional travellers.

“This deep cavern”—into which we were then looking—said my friend, “seems to have been like the cave to which Lot retired, in which, and out of

which came nothing but corruption and destruction." Simple as was the remark, it subserved the purpose of fixing this scriptural event indelibly upon my memory. Since which, this cave of the assassin, from whence he never emerged but to perform the work of destruction, has ever been singularly associated with the evil and ignominy of that cave to which Lot and his daughters retired. It has also induced the recurrence of other scripture localities, from their supposed resemblance in history or in fact, to any other places I have since beheld. Simple as is the history of an individual passing his life in comparative obscurity, there are yet many occurrences, which, if properly treasured up, would furnish an interesting fund of instruction and reminiscence for the contemplation and reflection of after years. There is just as much philosophy in the shock which the cottage receives, trembling under a sudden concussion of air, as in the vibration of a palace at the shock of distant thunder. The river Gad, forming the boundary line of the two tribes of Israel, and in this way associated with the history of Ammon and Moab, can never be forgotten.

HAROD.—A WELL.

The Jew's singular attachment for the city and country of his father's has been a fruitful theme of an inadversion during all periods of his history. Amid the most oppressive calamities, and the most severe and lengthened subjugation in foreign lands, that disposition which caused them to exclaim on a memorable occasion, "how can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land," was ever apparent. Six times have they witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem, yet still armed with courage, they turn their looks upon Zion, from which nothing can divert them. Slaves and strangers in their own land, they continue to dwell near the temple, of which there does not remain one stone upon another; awaiting under a most cruel and despotic government, a king who is to work their deliverance. While the Persians, Greeks and Romans, have disappeared from the face of the earth, this small people, whose origin is much more ancient than these mighty nations, still survive amidst the ruin of their country, without an alteration of manners, or mixture of foreign blood. Here too, in reality and in imagination, will they ever lin-

ger, with the pertinacity which has always formed one of their strongest characteristics, bewailing the desolation of Judah, and waiting for the time when God shall "renew their days of old."

Here too; the christian's delighted imagination is fixed; not only on account of its Old Testament associations, but because the Son of God accomplished the work of human redemption, or still yet, that the spark was here kindled, which shall enlighten all nations, but because here, a constellation of prophecies have been fulfilled in such manner as to carry conviction to every mind, of the solemn truth of Revelation. So without invalidating these truths, the Jew bowing beside the christian on the same consecrated spot, will worship the same God, with feelings of widely dissimilar devotion. One might infer, that a people so devoted to their country, would never have wanted those sentiments of patriotism, which induced the hazard of life in its defence. Sometimes, however, we have reason to believe they neglected to cultivate this, their laudible and truly national characteristic. This memorable well, is associated with an important event, exhibiting Israel on account of the oppression to which they had been so long subjected, or more probably, from a consciousness of guilt, to have been deprived of their

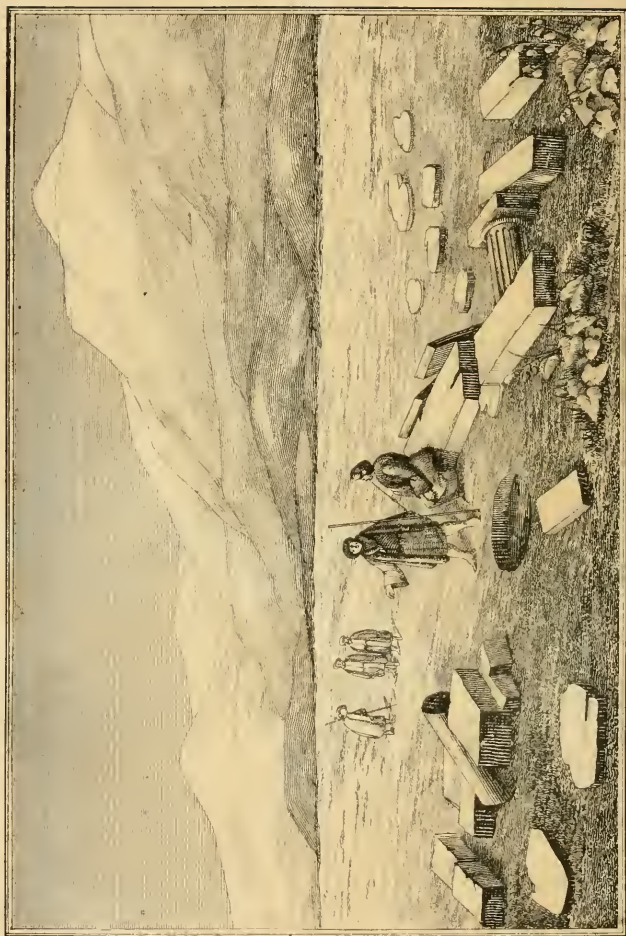
courage. The Midianites had long and severely oppressed them, so that reduced to the alternative of making a desperate effort, to weaken their foes, or submit to increased and unconditional oppression, we might have supposed, under the circumstances, greater effort would have been made to concentrate such numbers as would have given their enemies a signal defeat. With the most desperate exertion upon the part of Gideon, he could collect and concentrate, but thirty-two thousand men, which was numerically inferior to the host by which they were opposed. With this number, their distinguished and disciplined leader, was fearful to encounter the opposing host. In the midst of his anxious solicitude, as to the result of the contemplated engagement, and when bewailing the indifference of his followers, the Lord communicated to his ears the strange intelligence, that the people whom he had collected by the most untiring exertion, were too many for the Lord to give the Midianites into their hands. Lest Israel "vaunt themselves against me, saying, mine own hand hath saved me." Strange and unusual as was this announcement, Gideon preferred to submit to the Divine determination, rather than aggrandize his military reputation, at the cost of the Sovereign complacency. He was directed to inform those who,

were fearful, to depart early from Mount Gilead, the place of the encampment, as they, above all others, who had acted cowardly on former occasions, would be most likely, after the obtainment of victory, to take the honor from God, and appropriate it to themselves. Singular must have been the feelings of those twenty-two thousand Israelites, who under such circumstances, could desert their standard and their God. On Mount Gilead, might have been seen the remaining ten thousand, in the midst of deserted banners, whilst "arms" without the men to use them were thrown in indiscriminate confusion all around. Sorrowful were they, who, left behind, gazed with mingled feelings of pity and contempt, upon the retiring crowds, as they crossed the deep valley and disappeared behind trees and mountain heights. The air was clear and bracing as the early part of autumn, when the freshness of summer having scarce passed into the "sere and yellow leaf," like the bright sun in an unclouded evening, leaves its softest beauty and brilliancy behind it. The beams of the rising sun were shining brightly amid the few remaining flowers, and undecayed herbage of Mount Gilead, and brightening the long shadows cast forth from tree and brush, when the faint sound of half-suppressed disapprobation echoed along the ranks of the

few thousand of Israel, who yet remained. The high summit of the opposite mountain, was covered with the tens of thousands of the Midianitish host, displaying the ensigna of war, as preparatory to the combat around the camp in the valley below. Another battle must be fought; one desperate as powerful, must be fought and won, by the many and the mighty, against the few. The dread 'standard of oppression,' is for the last time flung to the breeze; and its followers swarm around it for its triumph or defeat. A crisis has arrived; and the period to which they had come, was that in which their destiny as a nation, would be determined. The sun, as if blushing at the event, had sunk behind an angry cloud, which overcast the heavens a short time after the withdrawal of the thousands of Israel's troops; and was now throwing the lighter and fleecy clouds around it, as a mighty ship casting the snowy sprays from its path, through the midnight waters. The mind of Gideon, the captain of Israel, seemed to loose itself in intense and painful thoughts. Amid feelings so peculiar, he was commanded to bring his soldiers to the well, or to the stream which issued from it, and there at a given sign, select those, whom God had chosen to go up against the camp of Midian. Three hundred only, of the remaining ten

thousand, lapped the water like dogs, which indicating haste and impatience, were alone deemed competent to go up against the foe. It must have been a severe trial to the faith and courage of Gideon, when God bade him let all the rest of the people, but those three hundred "go, every man to his place." Thus strangely was the already diminished army of Gideon, purged and reduced, and that too, as preparatory to the anticipated rencounter. It can but be interesting, to see how this little despicable regiment, on which the stress of the action must lie, were equipped for the singularly important combat. The cashiered regiments leaving their trumpets behind; these were directed to be employed as weapons of war, which with the stratagie of the pitchers and lights, (Judges, vii: xvi, xxii,) were the only means employed by Jehovah, for the rescue of his people. That same night, by direction of God, Gideon and Phurah his servant, went down disguised to the camp of the Midianites, and whilst there, heard a soldier tell his fellow, that he dreamed a "*cake of barley-bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell.*" Encouraged by this unmistakable evidence of the Divine aid, he returned to his camp, and aroused the three hundred warriors for the combat. As determined, with lights

concealed, and trumpets unblown, they were to enter stealthily into the camp of their foes, and at the signal blast of his trumpet, in the midst of the camp, the pitchers were to be broken, the lights revealed, and the trumpets sounded, as they rushed to the onset, "whilst the watchword, "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon," rang out beneath the stillness of the midnight heavens. Scarce were the words uttered, when a blaze of fire flashed through the tented encampment, lighting up the whole valley around. The encampment was completely environed by three hundred watch fires, by each of which reflected in the glaring light, stood the tall erect form of one of the "men of Gideon." It is impossible to conceive the startling and thrilling effect, which this sudden illumination—as if by magic—produced upon the bold and terrified enemies of Israel. Their horses stood still, paralyzed with affright, and before them, behind them, and on every side, their eyes rested upon the deadly sword, pointing menacingly towards their breasts. It is impossible to describe the carnage of that dreadful night. Israel victorious, routed and pursued the enemy, from which defeat they never recovered. The memory of this fearfully glorious night, and the well of Harod are "one and inseparable."



JACOB'S VELLE

JACOB'S WELL.

THERE is perhaps no country of the Holy land, more fruitful of interest to the student of scripture history, than that of Samaria. Receiving its name from the city of Samaria, formerly the capital of the Kings of Israel, which built by Omri, was probably founded about the year A. M. 3085. Scarce any city, with whose history we are familiar, has been more frequently subjected to a change of civil authority, or been the theatre of more dreadful carnage. Besieged by Benhaddad, king of Assyria, it was reduced to great extremity, but was miraculously delivered, according to the prediction of the prophet Elisha. It was, however, afterwards taken by Salamaneser, king of Assyria; who, after a siege of three years, carried away the ten tribes, and in their stead sent a colony from divers nations, who incorporating their superstitions with the truths of Judaism, made a most spurious religion. Laid in ruins by one of the family of the Maccabees, it was thus found by Herod the Great, who being pleased with its situation, re-built it in a stately manner, adorning it with fine marble pillars and other sculpture.

Agrippa obtaining the city of Caligula, the inhabitants took part with the Romans, under the Emperor Vespasian, by which they avoided the calamities which fell upon the country in consequence of the war. Afterwards, however by adopting other politics, they with the Jews, were exterminated from the the country by Adrian; since which the city has gone into decay. At present, few in number, there are still some of this people resident in the inconsiderable town of Naplous, the site of the ancient Samaria; who, retaining their priests and their religion, still offer sacrifices, observe the Sabbath, and keep the law of Moses, with much strictness, as they yet claim to be of the family of Aaron.

There is perhaps no event occurring in the life of the Savior, concerning which so much has been spoken and written, as his interview with the woman at the well of Samaria. An event marked by the concurrence of as many important circumstances as any of which we can form a conception. Precious and important as was every moment of the Savior's time, he still might improve the season of weariness to enlighten and instruct a poor woman who greatly needed his advice. As women were, in his time, treated as in every respect inferior to the opposite sex, it would seem he embraced every opportunity

to elevate their condition and improve their morals.

It is probable, that the first idea of a universal and permanent provision for the poor and destitute, as inclusive of the moral and mental elevation of the female constitution, originated with Christ and his Apostle, and that it continued a work of the church, and not at all of the state, down to a comparatively recent period. Here we see the christian dispensation becoming the basis of a new and benignant social order, excluding fraud and wrong, discord and opposition, and where the highest attainable good is striven for and secured. The undoubted experience of ascetic communities has attested the comparatively developed truth, that there is no longer a necessity, if indeed an excuse, for social evil.

Though the example of our Savior has been but too imperfectly followed, we are induced to hope that time of social degradation is at an end; whilst the effort and knowledge of an improvement in this particular, will soon linger only as a fearful tradition. The well of Samaria, being inseparably associated with the important and interesting conversation of Jesus with the woman who came to draw water, may be viewed as a practical illustration of his views on the "sphere and duties" of the sex. He whom angels worship and archangels adore, thought it not

unworthy the high position of the world's benefactor, to converse, at this opportune moment, with an obscure *female*, for even the *men* of whose nation the Jew had the most singular contempt. We can but admire that mind, which, while it scaled the universe and read the stars, could thus stand above and beyond the farthest verge of man's research, and hear aloft the remotest strains of music which swells through the heavenly spheres, and yet have a heart which could sympathise with all the phases of indigent humanity. So that in his solitary communings beneath the midnight heavens, he appeared to have been but qualifying himself to mingle with the everyday multitude, and proclaim to the clogged ear and heart of the desolate and mourning, in tones warm and sweet as the hope of pardon, that the chord of sympathy could be reached only by the voice of Jesus. From the mountain top, where he sat in the kindlings of the morning; from the watch-tower, where he had gazed into the serene heavens, he came down into the dusty, trampled highway, where encountering the rushing crowd, the various anxious faces, the selfish, hollow, husk religion of the world, he sent forth from every fibre of his soul the gladsome tidings of pardon and salvation. On such mission was he engaged, when arriving with his disciples at

the mouth of the "side valley," before the city, Jesus being wearied with his journey, sat down by the well, whilst they "went away into the city to buy meat." The simplicity of the evangelist's narrative is striking and peculiar; opening with the observation, "*there came a woman of Samaria to draw water.*" From this request to drink, sundry inquiries were suggested, eliciting answers the most singularly appropriate, by which she was convinced of the important dignity and wisdom of the stranger.

If we except perhaps the allusion made to the spirituality of God, and the necessary correspondence of his proper worship, there is no portion of his recorded conversation, so remarkable and consolatory as the promise, "*whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life;*" at the reading of which we have often closed the book, and exclaimed with a gush of unutterable joy,

"Spring up, O well, I ever cry,
Spring up within my soul!"

The shadows of the Savior's destiny even then began to fall around him, whilst a glance at the great picture of life, confirmed in him what is since suggested to the christian, that self-denial could but be

remunerated in the eternal consciousness of a high-minded discharge of those duties, which produce in their own reflections, an adequate recompense, in the form of that peace the world cannot give, or take away. A few shifting scenes, a succession of sentiments, vain regrets, ideal enjoyments, and the time-serving pretender to divine illumination has entered the deep valley of shadows to be seen no more in these walks below. How different was the language and doctrine of the Savior, as he sat in conversation with the woman on the arched chamber of Jacob's well! The *spirituality* of God, and of his worship, was an important truth which she was unaccustomed to hear.

However cheering its revelation to some, to us no truth is so unspeakably precious, as the thought that he who drives along the chariots of the countless hosts of the sky, dwells with the lowliest of his creation on this dim earth. Whenever we recur to our Savior's visit to this sacred well, let us pray that we may realize these truths, as we first think of our comparative nothingness, and then our positive connection with universal life and intelligence. Jerome chose to live in this valley, that the sight of these places might affect him the more with scripture stories. We may, in imagination, choose to frequent

this place, to be reminded that there is but one source of divine beauty and joy.

JORDAN—A RIVER.

It was a lovely morning in June; the rising sun was just tinging the summits of the rocky cliffs, which, like giant fortresses, studded at frequent intervals, the green shores of the beautiful Delaware. Here and there a truant ray rested on the lofty spire of some towering dome, and reflected from its gilded cross, gleamed forth through the morning mist, like a beautiful but solitary star, pausing to gaze on the glories of the morning landscape. A sabbath stillness, broken only by the sweet and fitful warblings of the wild-wood songsters, or the thoughtless humming of the loitering pedestrian, reigned over the green hills and broad vales surrounding the populous city. On such a morning as this, a few brief summers gone by, a man, habited in the peculiar style of the clerical profession, whose garb somewhat soiled, indicated the neglect or absence of the toilet, sat

leaning against the stern of one of those small boats which are constantly seen upon every considerable river, and which manned by a couple of boatmen, are occasionally employed in conveying passengers from quarantine to port. He was apparently a traveller, and on the occasion referred to, seemed to be engrossed whilst being conveyed ashore, by no earthly occupation, but to watch the sparkle of the waves, as the oars dipped lazily into the water, only starting from his dreamy attitude, as the boat struck the wharf, when the boatmen looking in each others faces, appeared surprised at his delay in quitting their aquatic vehicle. Looking round him for the moment, he seemed to wonder at the numerous glance of familiar faces, who coming hither to welcome his safe return to his native land, were standing in amaze at his singular inattention to their presence. A sudden emotion, too strong to be resisted, chained his advancing step, when, turning once more to glance at the river, over whose smoothe surface he had been silently borne, he paused as if summoning strength to quit the vessel, when a little gleeful voice, coming from amid the crowd, broke upon his ear, with the exclamation, "Dr. A——— has been to the river Jordan." Yes, he had visited this river, and now that he quitted its banks forever, he could

but revert to the scenes of thrilling adventure, through which he had passed, as the murmuring ripple of his native river fell in sacred harmony upon his ear. Often, in his solitary journeyings on his native soil, and in his brief sojournings in the crowded cities of other lands, did the image of this noble river, winding along over mossy stones, beneath the trunks of prostrate trees, and between its wild banks, mingle in the visions of his midnight slumbers. Rising in the mountains of Lebanon, in the northern extremity of Canaan, the Jordan, after running sixteen or eighteen miles, spreads out into a flat marshy place, forming the lake Semechon, called in Scripture, the waters of Merom. Leaving this lake, and running about fifteen miles further, it enters the Sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, from the southern end of which, it again issues, and after a course still South, of about one hundred and fifty miles further, it finally empties into the Dead Sea. Though the river anciently overflowed its banks in the spring, when the snows were melting on Mount Lebanon, it appears from the accounts of modern travellers, that these floods are now less, and more unfrequent. Covered as the banks are, with trees and weeds, under which lions and other wild beasts hide, the allusion to their being driven out by the rise in its waters, by the

prophet Jeremiah, is not among the least of its most pleasing reminiscences. Below the Sea of Tiberias, travellers describe the river as being generally, but twenty or thirty yards wide, passing through a plain which according to Josephus, was one hundred and fifty miles long, and fifteen wide. Within this encircled valley, many of the most important events of Jewish history are said to have transpired. Events, which, when they occurred, thrilled the nation with alternate pulsations of sorrow and joy. Here were enacted scenes, strangely in contrast with each other, and our conceptions of what should have formed an appropriate association with this sacred stream. Scenes, which among its banks and winding shores, shall continue to thrill alike the heart of the Jew and the christian, to the most distant generations of time.

The retired timidity which seemed to characterize the speculations of the learned among the Jews, which like a ray of moonlight peering through the crevice of closed curtains, upon some object within, was now scattering itself, and was being spread over the indistinct personifications of prophecy, like an angel's wing, as the visible promise of protection to the redeemed. The expectant Israelite, happy in the increased creation of spiritual sunshine within,

seemed now to feel an overflowing fountain of consolation springing up within his soul. The cedars of Lebanon assumed a holiday dress of perpetual verdure; the golden sheaves stood up in the fields, whilst the flowering shrubs and twining vines, appeared flaunting proudly in their gorgeous tinge of purple and gold. The crumbling arch, not of a ruined castle, or time-worn tower, but that which supported the ancient and venerable tower of his spiritual edifice, was decaying to the fall. Resting in antiquated glory, on the spot consecrated by the offering and faith of Abraham, he began but indistinctly, to hear the murmur of "Siloa's brook," which leaping up from its concealment beneath a ledge of gray rock, made but a dreamy, though delicious melody. The anticipated time, when he who had said, "he would come and would not tarry" had arrived. The nation diffidently attempting to peer through the thick clouds which obscured the stream of prophecy, were thrilled only by the falling of its current over the mysterious and rocky elevations of accumulating centuries. In the midst of this hesitating, though general expectation, a voice unlike that they were accustomed to hear, rang out over the wilderness of Judea, in accents singularly emphatic, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Standing on

the banks of the Jordan, the mysterious being, from whom came this singular announcement, looked abroad over the hills and valleys, to greet the sound of approaching footsteps, and to show his true and tender heart, was impatient to drive away the dense shadows, that he might glorify God for the appearance of the rising sun. Crowds from city and hamlet, town and country, attracted by this strange and mysterious personage, came pouring down the steepes which, like giant watchers, overlooked the "flashing jewelry" of Jordan's waves. Labor, business, pleasure was forsaken in the eager desire to obtain an audience with the "Elias" of prophecy. In the hazy light of morn, as also when twilight shadows obscured the last lingering sunbeam, myriads waited on the ministry of John. The thousands of Israel paused in glad astonishment, on the banks of this noble river, in hourly anticipation of the fulfilment of his prophecies. The time fixed, as the consummation of their wishes had now arrived. The long promised Savior was to be revealed. Angels had already sung their song of congratulation over the heights of Bethlehem, until their echoing chorus awakened the throbbing sympathies of an expectant world. Hitherto, they had but roamed its green margin, with zealous ardor, and radiant human coun-

tenances, to deliver their encouraging messages. Henceforth, in garments of dazzling whiteness and glittering crowns, they were to attune their golden harps by the banks of the crystal river of life. The spiritual atmosphere of the world, within the delicious haze of which spirits might sink away in dreamy slumber, was now assuming an increasing glow, as if mingling with floods of celestial glory. The spell of heaven, causing men to wonder amid seeming delights, awaked the voice of pleasure, which heard in one continuous strain, sounded on grand and anthem-like, as from the sea of life to the shore of eternity.

Amid such scenes, and under such circumstances, He, of whom "all the prophets bare witness," was presented to John's enrapt and expectant auditors. Knowing the impropriety of two great rivals remaining on earth, to divide the attention, and induce feelings of partisan rivalry, he appeared impatient to close his own ministry, that every degree of confidence might be placed on the Redeemer. As the moon still lingering at opening dawn, conceals itself in the brighter atmosphere, by which it is surrounded so this eminent prophet, who only shone in the advancing scintillations of the sun of righteousness, re-invested his exit with the light of that day, on

which it rose full orb'd on the world. Coming down from the mountains, greeted by cheerful sounds, swelling out far and wide around him ; he stood amid dense and enveloping mists, through which the clear river flashed like lightning amid parting clouds ; he was pointed out to the expectant gaze of countless thousands, as the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Breathing the pure air of his native mountains, he descended to the multitude, beneath its preserving and expansive influence, encircled in such clouds of Holy light, as will be forever sufficient to invert his Disciples in its folds of celestial radiance. Divided by the advancing hosts of Israel, and successively by the prophets Elijah and Elisha, and the theatre of the respective initiatory ministrations of "the Baptist" and of Christ, this river can but be interesting to the pious of every age and clime, Emblem of death, of triumph and of sorrow, of deliverance and of captivity, the crossing of its "billows," whether in life or death, will ever be an event of singular importance.

KIDRON—A BROOK.

A glance at the great picture of life will show, that while the duties of self-denial, and the sacrifice of passion to principle, are but seldom rewarded, that the internal consciousness of a high-minded discharge of our duty, produces in our own reflections an adequate recompense, in the form of that peace which the world cannot give or take away. When we gaze upon the vast panorama of sorrow, we are prepared, in affection and pursuit, to look with a bright philosophy on the providences of Heaven. Through its influence, we will cherish a love of those true and beautiful revelations, which teach us we have little more of life's wealth to ask, and few of its privations to fear. As we approach the period of dissolution, when long trains of mournful reflections come trooping over our minds, it is but natural we should inquire, whither goes the soul when the last gleam hath faded from the eye, and the stern gray twilight of the grave hath settled on each quiescent feature. With such reflections we instinctively realize the condition of the soul when, wrapped in unconsciousness, its physical organs refuse any longer

to be the interpreters of its will. We appear to realize the dawning of a great day, which shall give another embodiment to the newly awakened spirit.

The contemplation of that period, when we shall be called upon to quit the world, with all its stirring interests and warm companionships, its high promises and lofty deeds, for a state that has never yet had one ray thrown into its darkness, makes us feel the impenetrable clouds in which we are wrapt; whilst our heart-strings, like the harp, vibrating to viewless fingers, trembles with a thrill of strange, unwonted melody. Think not that disembodied intelligences never commune with those still fettered to the dust. Our eyes may not see them, nor the ear reveal their presence; yet, when the chains of clay are falling from the soul, and, fluttering on its unpractised pinions, it seeks to elevate its affections, upbuild the holy purpose, and strengthen the pure resolve, they hover round, to cheer, teach and uplift us.

We would not commend a perpetual reference to the future, as alone possessing the elements of satisfaction. This would effectually blind our vision to the beautiful revelations of Deity, everywhere exhibited. Our ear, only attuned to the soft melody of unearthly strains, would catch but the faint whis-

perings of nature's everlasting hymn, which blends in the harmony of sounds, from the soft breathing of the growing violet to the rushing of the wheelings of stupendous worlds. When greatly oppressed, we may not keep along the uninstruative path of human sorrow, wrapped up in the selfishness of conscious suffering. Then ours is the duty and privilege to tread on the silvery embroidery of the wide-spread canvass of space, on which the love of God will be alike exhibited in the tint of the rainbow, as in the smile which illumines the stern features of death. This disposition will convert the universe into a temple, arched with the sparkling jewelry of the heavens; so that, whether we retire to the place where the "Lord *lay*," or look from Kidron's vale to the heights of Olivet, and from thence gaze adoringly on the serene sky above, we shall encouragingly hope for deliverance from wrong, as we receive strength to labor in the accomplishment of our destiny.

Amid the fierce conflict of sorrow and passion, we shall see through the veil of twilight, which, while filling our spacious temple, will permit us to behold the coming of a more bright and blissful morning. Thus did our Savior. Retiring to the brook Kidron, which, winding on the eastern side

of Jerusalem, through the valley of Jehoshaphat, echoed its soft and dreamy melody amid dark groves of the rustling palm; there, when the shadows of his destiny began to linger about his pathway, he held sweet, sustaining communion with the spirit world. Though comprehending within the range of his vision the extended amplitude of that universe, with which he held strange and mysterious converse, he yet chose to retire to this secluded spot, where his active energies, instead of being lulled to slumber with the melody of those chords within, that ever thrill to the beautiful and sublime, received wisdom from the soft-breathed air.

Thou soft gliding Kidron, by thy silver streams,
The Savior at midnight, when Cynthia's pale beams
Shone bright on the waters, would frequently stray,
And *loose* in thy murmurs the toils of the day.

The vale of Kidron, the retiracy of which sympathized strangely with the Redeemer's sorrow, from whose shades he came but to depart to familiar skies, must ever continue an object of special interest to the sorrowing disciple.

KISHON—A RIVER.

It has been frequently remarked, that a character of a high and lofty stamp is degraded, rather than exalted, by an attempt to reward virtue with temporal prosperity. From which it is supposed to be dangerous to teach, that either rectitude of conduct and of principle are either naturally allied with, or adequately rewarded by the gratification of our passions, or the attainment of our wishes. Passion and preference may induce the performance of deeds which, while they extort the applause of men, can never suborn the harmonious testimony of reason and conscience. To secure the felicity of their concurrent approbation, we must subordinate the impulse of will to the decision of a truthful and enlightened judgment. The subjection of our lives to the impulse of passion is, in reality, persuading ourselves that fiction is to be preferred to fact—that to feel, is better than to enjoy. The government of our lives, on principles contrary to reason and religion, will subject us to great inconvenience, from having a distorted view of those objects upon which we place our affections. Not so, however, with the individual with whom

conscience and reason are supreme. He mistakes not the dream for the reality, the shadow for the substance, the mere parhelion for the luminous sun of righteousness, whose beams of light and love are reflected, full-orbed, on the meridian sky.

The mission of reason, distinct from passion, has reference to all the powers within; and whilst sanctifying all the relationships of life, is eminently serviceable to the social feelings in awakening the sympathies and endearing the humanities of a charitable career. Religion aids us in reviewing the past, in endeavoring to solve the mystery—how that which has been is produced, what tributes have imparted fullness to the streams that run clear or turbid, what now is pouring into them, and what their course will probably be. Her presence is observable in the conduct of the good and great of every age, whenever there were duties to be rendered, and wherever the good, the true and the useful were struggled for and obtained. Heed we then the admonitory voice of conscience and duty, which will cause our souls to speak out the solemn and gracious accents of pardon; and, like Jesus standing amid the vanities of Israel, our example will speak with the authority of truth, equity and love, felt and acted in all the relations of life.

There never was a time, in all probability, in the history of the world, when there was less respect shown to practical piety, than in the days of the prophet Elijah. From the prince to the peasant, from the palace to the cot, the unrestrained prostitution of their powers in idol worship, appears to have produced a general contempt for true and spiritual worship. The eye of the prophet, pained by the universal neglect of the altars of God, seemed ever intent on beholding the dense shadows and noxious mists; whilst, from want of faith, he lacked the ability to peer through the clouds, and glorify God for the mission of the rising sun. Influenced by the light of revelation, accustomed in all his ideas to associate religion and morality, adopting the divine will and oath as the guide of his conscience and the standard of his practice, the prophet could not sympathize with the transplanted though fabled powers of Jupiter, the eternal jealousies of Juno, the craft and stratagem of Mercury, or the corrupt licentiousness of Venus. Discouraged in the comparative failure of repeated attempts at moral reformation of the nation, he seemed disinclined to a renewal of his efforts; forgetting that such men as he were needed to strip off the cerements of error, to preach the truth, to call the nation to duty, to

encourage the hopes of the desponding, and deliver the oppressed from those wrongs which interfered in the accomplishment of their destiny.

Mount Carmel, near the base of which flows the river Kishon, was the theatre on which confusion was brought upon the enemies of God. Upon the banks of the one the men of Israel, at the command of Elijah, had slain the prophets of Baal, mingling their blood with its waters; and on the summit of the other God had sent down fire, to consume the sacrifice, to the justification of the prophet. These occurrences have naturally magnified this river in our estimation, which will carry along with its ceaseless flow the memory of these great and important achievements.

This stream will ever perpetuate the truth, that the "servant of the Lord," coming from the forests where he has communed with nature and with God, is but being prepared to come forth into the dusty, trampled highway, where mingling with the rushing crowd, he is prepared to rebuke the selfish striving, the hollow friendships, and the dry-husk religion of the world.

KANAH—A BROOK.

EVERYTHING is interesting, that relates to the history of Israel. A people retaining their distinctive and peculiar character, under sad reverses of fortune, and in a state of exile from their "father land," will ever be a marvel in the history of the world. Whilst nations in point of grandeur and political importance, more renowned than they, are extinct, and nought, but a few remains of architectural beauty exhibit their former splendor; the Hebrew retains that character and feeling, which distinguished him in the days of his country's glory. Retaining the creed and worship of his fathers; wherever found, he has the same attachment for the rites and ceremonies of the ancient ritual. Unlike christianity, which, when the seat of government was removed by Constantine from Rome to Constantinople, gave a sensible preponderance to the Grecian districts of the Empire, and caused the ecclesiastical determinations of the Greek Church to be received with respect and submission. Judaism always respected the memory of its capital, and subjected all to its authority, though "trodden down of the

Gentiles.” In every act of devotion, under whatever circumstances performed, the Jew was wont to imagine the splendid architecture of the temple, as encircling him to catch the fervent breathings of his saddened soul. Turning to the land of his fathers, he promises to himself a time, when delivered from his oppressors, he shall again be reinstated in the home of his heart, the Jerusalem of his joy, where he shall be doomed no more to

“——— *Wander withering by,
In other lands to die.*”

Sad as is their condition now, they were formerly chargeable, with carelessness or cowardice, in defence of their country's rights and interests. The reproach of God rests upon the Ephraimites, that they did not drive out the Canaanites from Gerar, but foolishly hoped to satisfy the law by putting them under tribute. This capital error, instead of restraining them from idolatry, as the sequel shows, induced them to fall into it themselves. The practical and important lesson furnished by their conduct, should be heeded by all christians, who hope by a compromise with their adversaries, to secure undisturbed repose. Strange indeed, was their forgetfulness. Strange, that with the memory of the Divine command, and almost within view of that Sinai, from

whence the Spirit of liberty proclaimed—"Thou shalt no longer bow the knee to kingly idols," they should have forgotten their pre-eminence and the commanding mountain eminence, replete with sublime historical recollections.

Their history reminds us, that whilst oblivious of their faults, we may recall their virtues, which having become visible, shine with radiant lustre in this, the dark night of their history. Hearts broken, doomed to insult and injury, these generous Hebrews, the world knew not, ever shunning the public gaze, were received among the habitations of men, like "angels unawares." When Judah and Ephraim shall no longer "envy and vex each other," we may hope that Palestine so full of natural beauty, is destined to be rendered doubly beautiful by the adornment of Art. Every decoration which taste can suggest, or love bequeath, under the Divine superintendence, whether they be the flowers of infancy, or the sturdy oaks of age, shall be speedily planted. while to and around them, will ever cling with perpetual freshness, the green vines of love and memory.

The brook of which we are now writing, formed the western boundary of this tribe, and as such, is of interest to us. Discriminating between acts attributed to the nation under this title, and the tribe of

Ephraim, we may enumerate within its borders, the residence of a Seer, or the scene of some important event. In it was Samaria, long the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes. Here too, was Ramah, Samuel's city, called in the New Testament, Arimathea. From hence was Joseph, who, when the moon in tranquil brilliancy, shed a soft spiritual light upon the picturesque environs of Jerusalem, went to perform the rites of sepulture, to the body of Jesus. Thither he repaired as a lone sad watcher, whilst no sound but the musical murmurs of the sighing trees, falling on the ravished ear, like the undulations of some fairy minstrelsy, broke sadly the intensity of the silence, as ever and anon, the measured tread of the sentinel on the tower, came ringing on the ear with startling emphasis.

Leaving these watchers at the tomb of Jesus, we close the sketch by asking, can such a scene, or the Ephraimite Joseph, whose land was encircled by this brook, ever be forgotten.

SOREK—A BROOK.

Two events recorded in the Bible, occurring at the interval of centuries, have quite a resemblance one to the other, if indeed the first did not typify the last more remarkable and important occurrence. We refer to the respective and luminous announcements of the birth of Samson and Christ. Both mothers were informed of the event, by an "angel of the Lord," and both, when born, were the appointed instruments of deliverance and salvation. Both events were opportune, and both as far as their mission was concerned, exhibited a singular, most remarkable and important career. Bound by a superstition which had prevailed in all ages, Manoah supposed they would surely die, having seen a vision of God. It was reserved for a fuller manifestation, to convince him of the erroneous impression. At his request, the heavenly visitant again appeared. Setting near the edge of one of their fields, just where the shadows from the circling wood, stretched out in indication of declining day, the wife of Manoah, looking up amid the dark branches of the trees, tinged with occasional gleams of sunlight, beheld an

object clad in white, and luminous with celestial glory, skimming the tree tops in a chariot of gold. Astonishing, though familiar was the sight. This was that which had before communicated the tidings of a promised Son. Soon speeding to her husband with the joyful intelligence, he returned, and interrogated that which he now knew to be a messenger of love and not of fear. Tendering hospitality to the celestial visitant, it was declined; but at his suggestion, a sacrifice was offered to the Lord, which, when the red light and flame of the offering glared in the dusky twilight, it was made the chariot, which, while enshrouding his person, bore him aloft to his native of heaven. No more did friend or angel come but in the "fulness of time" the promised child was born. We now change the scene. Years have gone by. Oppression's iron heel, every heavy, bore down with peculiar power on the "tribes." The insolent enemies of Israel have waxed fat on the spoil of the people. Family after family have been massacred. The midnight heavens glared with the assassins torch and echoed the shriek of the dying babe and mother. The oppressive monotony of despair, sank the spirits and unnerved the nation's mighty arm. The wail of oppression echoed so long from the neighboring hills, that the sound but faintly repeated the myriad

voices of their woe. Dark as was the scene, there yet was hope; change we yet again the scene.

'Twas one of those delicious evenings, which occasionally interrupt the oppressive heat of the summer months. A cooling shower from the west had laid the dust, which floating in clouds through the air, diffused its refreshing influence around; while the soft wind, laden with fragrant odors, regaled the senses, and bathed the fevered temples. The rain drops sparkling like tears over the gladdened earth, were soon absorbed in the smiles of the sun, as he emerged in splendor from the brilliant shadows that enveloped him. Soon as the clouds dispersed, and nothing was visible above, but the arching bright blue sky, a young woman just blooming into the fullness and maturity of virgin loveliness; whose every look and action, awed while it charmed, might have been seen moving gracefully beneath a shaded grove, through which, winding amid verdant banks, murmured the quiet roll of the ancient brook Sorek. A short distance from this retired walk, where the green valley abruptly terminated, at the base a sloping hill, might have been seen a man, slowly advancing toward the margin of the stream. That man was Sampson, the child of angelic vision, and parental hope; the judge of Israel and the *strength* of

the nation. A man whom all supposed was the master of his passions, and from whose history we learn he was distinguished in earlier years for the active and ennobling qualities of a superior nature. Alone, he was a pillar, connected with the destinies of this deceitful, artful woman; he was as defenceless as the grass, to which the wind setting fire, leaves only the impress of the burning wherever it has passed. Turning upon the majestic stranger, the look of mutual recognition, gave place to the animated fever of her eyes, which dilated with astonishment, and languid with love, shone fixedly like two stars. That look sealed his fate! And contemplating that profanation of self, that suicide of his nation's interests, and his own happiness, to the deceitfulness of a heathen damsel's smile, seems now to raise the cup of bitterness to memory's satiated taste, and veil our eyes with a robe of mourning.

Yet with the golden chalice of love came also the cup of hatred. Ensnared by the light of "woman's eyes," and subjected to the tortuous pleasure of her passions, he conceived that deep rooted hatred to her people, which led to such acts of secret and signal vengeance. Though the instruments with which they sought to work upon his passions were gay, and their attitudes were those of joy,

their slow and long drawn notes of deception stirred his saddened soul, causing the hidden chords to vibrate to its depths. "Thus when stripping him of his wife, the offer of the younger daughter produced the withering rebuke which he gave the Philistines, who to appease him burnt the father and wife with fire.

Never did the craft and artifice of men work their own destruction, so effectually as in the case of the "lords of the Philistines." On that memorable day, when they engaged in the performance of their obscene orgies to Dagon, Sampson, in obedience to the anxiously solicited divine permission, bowed against the temple's massive pillars, which, falling with thunder-crash, buried thousands beneath its ruins. Remarkable in life, singular in the manner of his death, a type of Him whose "arm" brought salvation, the brook Sorek, connected with his history, will be memorable as one of the "Sacred Fountains" of the Holy Land.

THE RIVER NILE.

WE did not intend to leave the territory of Canaan, to describe any of those streams or fountains that have only a historical association with the Holy Land. There is one river, however, which we cannot pass by, without lingering amid the hallowed and venerable reminiscences which cluster on its banks. Historically we cannot enter the confines of Israel, without first viewing the lofty pyramids and obelisks of Egypt—monuments which probably they assisted in erecting—and passing thence by “the way” of the Red Sea. We would like to tarry in the land of Goshen, to retrospect the rich scenery of its task-cultured and productive fields, and to meditate with joy and wonder, on the history of that people, whose characteristics are yet much more distinct than their sculptured hieroglyphics.

There is much in Egypt to interest and instruct, apart from this history. Its tall monuments and stately grandeur, its ancient literary renown, comes up on the classic pages of Grecian and Roman literature. Other historians than Moses have spoken of the fame of Ptolemies, of Cambyses and

Cleopatra. We are not now writing for those, who have heard of the golden-canopied galleys of the queen, in the sometimes stale representations of the tragedian. We cannot think that Shakespeare immortalized Mark Antony, or that Egypt owes much to him, for the tragic coloring with which he has invested the life and exit of her illustrious queen. But what christian traveller visits here without turning away from these melancholy remains of decaying grandeur, to the contemplation of the history of that great people, who once thickly crowded the broad banks of the Nile? The natural characteristic of this stream, its periodical overflowings, impart to it unusual interest. But for this, those ancient colonies, who, coming from Babel, subsided on its banks, would have gone westward, and become mingled with those who founded Carthage, and whose descendants, scaling the heights of Mount Atlas, afterward became the more modern rivals and enemies of Spain.

All the important events in the history and deliverance of the Jews from captivity, transpired on its banks. Here, on the promulgation of Pharaoh's cruel edict, Moses was concealed amid the flag branches on the margin, and was taken hence by the Princess, to be reared in the family of the King.

And here, when Pharaoh would not let "the people go," God transformed its clear current into a stagnant ocean of blood; and over its dark waves flapped the broad wing of the destroying angel, as he passed over the blood-besprinkled door posts of the houses of Israel. With what humble though pleasing recollections would the Israelites turn back their thoughts to those terrible visitations with which God "brought them forth?" In after years, when the two nations once more engaged in combat, or, as was sometimes the case, in some unholy alliance, would they once more launch upon the broad bosom of this placid stream.

What great and terrible events, ancient and modern, crowd upon these annually overflowing shores? We are not now able to recount those which only depend on the uncertain statements of prejudiced cotemporaries, who may have handed down many gross misstatements. Perhaps no nation, retaining many of its ancient peculiarities, has been brought so prominently forth amid the most exciting scenes of modern history. These great events are rapidly fading away, in the prospective improvements which modern civilization suggests. The day is not distant, may indeed be at hand, when the narrow, rock-bound valley of the Nile will be thickly dotted over

with such substantial evidences of enterprize, as cluster thickly on the banks of the Connecticut or the Thames.

For a long time the sources of the Nile were unknown; but it is now ascertained to take its rise in the high-lands north of the equator. The land is wholly dependent on the periodical inundations of the river. A rise of sixteen fathoms is sufficient to secure the prosperity of the country. "Such, however, is the regularity of nature, and such the faithfulness of God, that for thousands of years, with but few and partial exceptions, these inundations have, in essential particulars, been the same." During the overflow the land is literally inundated, and has the appearance of a sea dotted with islands. Wherever the waters reach abundance springs forth. The husbandman has scarcely more to do than to scatter the seed. No wonder that a river whose waters are so grateful, salubrious and beneficial, should in days of ignorance have been regarded as an object of worship, and that it is still revered and beloved.

We will not stop to speculate longer upon the present condition and prospects of Egypt, its history and polity. Like all those nations in which the Mohammedan bears rule, there is apparent a general

inattention to the solid domestic refinements and comforts. We look forward with pleasure to that period, when these otherwise amiable people will be devliered from their gross superstitions, and when the gospel shall become to the inhabitants what this river is to the soil; when the parched spiritual ground "shall become a pool; and the thirsty land, springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes."

THE RED SEA.

THERE is one sea, which, though not numbered among the sacred waters of Canaan, is intimately connected with the early history of the Jews. We refer to that large desert-encircled body of water known as the Red Sea. Were it not that it is so important, the increasing dimensions of the volume would suggest its omission. We do not fear, however, that we shall weary the reader with a subject so full of interest. This great inland sea, lies between the Territories of Egypt and Arabia, and was anciently a part of that great chain of commercial intercourse, which poured the wealth of the Indies into King Solomon's realm.

It forms the north-eastern boundary of Africa, and may yet be distinguished as the direct line for the European transit of oriental trade. We need not now refer to this great question, with the view of stating the various conflicting opinions which greatly agitate the rival European and American nations, or which may serve to mystify this somewhat problematic subject. We yet think that the day is not distant, when the increasing commercial importance of

the States bordering on the Mediterranean, may suggest some more speedy and commodious means of transportation and travel. This prospective question, scarce heightens the importance attached to the historical reminiscences of this great body of water. The first thought ever present to the traveller, and to the student of Sacred Geography, is the great miracle of the deliverance and passage of the Israelites. Taken altogether, it is the most stupendous event of Bible history; having about it, that air of the terrible and sublime, with which we are ever wont to view the stirring occurrences in the great panorama of nature. The ocean, vast, boundless, whether in storm or calm, is the great mirror of God, the emblem of power and majesty, and the great wind harp, which chords its tones in tempests and leaves its requiem on a thousand shores.

Always terrible, with what emotion think you, would we view each wave, impelling wave, did we view the direct agency of the Divine hand, lifting up wave on wave, and beating up its wide white foam on the coral reefs of a hundred seas. Language utterly fails to describe that sense of grandeur, which must fill the breast of the pious storm-tossed mariner. And yet, all these conceptions fall very far short of giving an adequate view of that great deliv-

erance and overthrow. Egypt was the birth-place of the Jewish nation; the rough-rocked cradle of their glorious nationality. Like the crucible of most nations, ancient and modern, it served only to refine the increasing materials of opulence and empire. We need not go back to their embryo history, in the family of Jacob, nor to the confines of Canaan, to trace the great events which were afterwards worked out by the infatuated policy of the Pharaohs. They needed just that preparation, and much more, before they were fitted to assume their influential Lycurgan position among the nations. Humanly speaking, with this view, their "three days journey into the wilderness," and their whole previous history, was not to be compared to that Divine lesson, learned in full view of the overthrow of the oppressor.

There is about this whole history, something which takes strong hold of the imagination; seizing upon the innate emotions of grandeur, and making the whole scene pass swiftly before us. We have sometimes seen the dark clouds gather in the distance, and the whole heavens rolling out, like wave upon wave, whilst ever and anon, the wayward paths of lightning, were vividly traced on the back ground of the distant sky. The dividing of the waters of the Red Sea, and the quick rush of waves, may have

been somewhat like this phenomenon, as the dark-crested billows parted hither and thither by the power of God. Nothing can exceed the stately simplicity with which this grand event is recorded. The Israelites had journeyed prosperously, until within sight of the Sea, when they caught the first sad view of the pursuing army. Defiling in, and encamping between two ranges of mountains, there was no possible means of escape, but back through the narrow valley, through which they had passed. In front was the Red Sea, and in the rear the gradually increasing host of Pharaoh, filling up every valley, and clustering thickly over every hill. We can scarce wonder, that they "cried unto the Lord," and that they chided Moses for bringing them forward to the prospect of such immense slaughter. On the whole, however, their conduct was quite irrational and unbecoming, unworthy of them, and extremely ungrateful to God. They had not yet any true conception of the dignity of freedom, or of that just contempt, with which mankind generally view every relapse into unresisting subjection. Like many others, they had not yet fully tasted its blessings, or realized that happiness which flows from the unrestrained enjoyment of social and religious liberty. We need not enter into a detail of the

controversy, as to the precise spot where Moses crossed; though we confess the subject is not devoid of interest. Mr. Stevens, the illustrious American traveller, thinks he did not cross near Suez, as from that point, to a considerable distance down the gulf, there was a high range of mountains, which it would be necessary to cross, an undertaking which it would have been physically impossible, for six hundred thousand people, men, women and children to accomplish, with a hostile army pursuing them. He says: "At Suez, Moses could not have been hemmed in as he was; he could go off into the Syrian desert, or unless the Sea has greatly changed since that time, round the head of the gulf; but here, directly opposite where I sat, was an opening in the mountains, making a clear passage from the desert to the shore of the sea." Here, most probably, he came down with his multitude to the shore, and here finding himself hemmed in, in the manner described in the Bible, with the Sea before him, and the army of Pharaoh in his rear; it was he who had stretched out his hand and divided the waters; and probably on this very described spot, the children of Israel had kneeled down to offer thanks to God for his miraculous interposition. At this point, the Sea is about twenty miles across, on the great caravan

route, from the Ramesch of the Pharaohs, the distance which that immense multitude, with their baggage could have passed in the space of time mentioned in the Bible. Here the Israelites crossed over, and in which the "Egyptians assaying to do were drowned." Here the waters' parted "hither and thither," and here when Pharaoh passed in,

From steep to steep, loud thund'ring billows come,
A watery waste in dire commotion all;
And swords, and spears, and chariots, and plumes,
And anon, whole brigades of marching troops,
Unconscious, trusting in their proud array,
Are deep beneath the smothering ruin whelm'd.

Whilst on this part of our description, which pertains to the passage of the Red Sea, by the Israelites, we may insert a small part of an interesting letter from Bruce, on this subject. The letter is in part a reply to the curious enquiries of the learned Michaelis.

"I must confess," says the former "however learned the gentleman who proposes these doubts, I did not think they merited any attention to solve them. This passage is told us by Scripture, to be a *miraculous* one; and if so, we have nothing to do with *natural* causes. If we do not believe Moses, we need not believe the transaction at all, seeing that it is from his authority alone we derive it. If we believe

in God, that he *made* the Sea, we must believe he could *divide* it when he sees proper reason; and of that, he must be the only proper judge. It is no greater miracle to divide the Red Sea, than to divide the river Jordan." It was here also, that Miriam and her companions, in conformity to the manners and customs of the Egyptians, celebrated the triumph with music and dancing. When we come to such sublime investigations, in the truthful simplicity of implicit trust, we will soon discover that God's goodness, as well as his omniscience, in leaving much of these divine wonders to be matter of faith and not of knowledge, showing us all the while, that each act of faith raises us higher above the sea of doubt, and the tempest of confusion. We may close this description, with one more statement from the distinguished traveller already quoted.

"I directed Paul to pitch my tent, with the door toward the place of the miraculous passage. I shall never forget that sunset scene. I was sitting on the very spot where the chosen people of God, after walking over the dry bed of the Sea, stopped to behold the divided waters returning to their place, and swallowing up the host of the pursuers. The mountains on the other side looked dark and portentous, as if proud and conscious witnesses of the

mighty miracle, while the sun descending slowly behind them, long after it had disappeared, left a reflected brightness, which illumined with an almost supernatural light, the dark surface of the water." Thus may be with us, when we have "pitched our tent on the last sunset shore of life, may it dart back its last radiant faithful scintillations on the divided sea of life; lapsing back forever on the enemies of Israël and of God.

RIVER OF LIFE.

IN the preceding sketches, I have confined myself to the description of scenes alone, supposing each to be full of instruction, and designed to be the means of inculcating a great moral lesson. The location and historical association of these streams and fountains, necessarily lead to a definiteness of description. We propose, in the following sketch, to depart from the preceding course, so far as to describe that river, which, issuing forth from 'neath the Throne Eternal, rolls out on the vast plains of Paradise, flashing and gleaming in the sunlight of heaven.

Taking our position hard by its source, our eye instinctively follows "wave impelling wave," until stream and vision are lost amid the golden clouds which obscure the far off outline of the arching sky. Tracing the stream back again, the flash of its wave seems as though the sunbeam, reflected from the crystal bed of the river, shone in the drops on the surface of the stream, and caused them to gleam like a diamond in the sun.

No marvel, then, that David standing upon the heights of Zion, surrounded by enemies, oppressed

with trouble and sorrow, exclaimed in a transport of devotion—"There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God." Some desponded of help, but to him it was reserved to strike with hope and faith that lyre, which, thrilling his own bosom, sent throughout his valley encircled city, the triumphant strain of confiding love. Strengthened by the expression of such hopeful trust, animated by the unfailing promises of Heaven, the Psalmist, looking at the history of his people, and then at the providence of God, cast back his vision, which, catching in the amplitude of its range, arid wastes, desolate, barren vales, and the rocky elevations of difficulty and danger; where also his eye rested with delight upon the stream, now partially obscured, there winding, and now again pouring down upon the church its healthful current of salvation and joy. The voice of the Psalmist, in the Old, and the response of the "Revelator," in the New Testament, testifying the one to the other, and echoing aloft amid the heavens, proclaims aloud the existence and continuance of this ever blessed stream. David, standing on the heights of Zion, in the Old, and John, standing on the more elevated and spiritual Zion of the New Jerusalem, looking forward and back along the intervening crystal stream, were enabled to proclaim their

exuberance of joy, in contemplating its existence and continued flow. The Christian, standing on its verdant banks, and viewing the windings through years of deep despondency, feels, as its slightly undulating flow washes around his feet, that its current ever incessant, is ever unvaried in the volume of its delicious and limpid joy. What the gentle, dream-like murmur of Siloa was to Jerusalem, and Jordan's roar to the Holy Land, this river has ever been to the "tribes of the Lord," in every age and clime. In source with God, it has ever been the supply of his church. Whatever blessing, of whatever kind or character; whether of truth to convict, convert and confirm, or of wisdom to aid in the selection of that which is good and sanctifying, all, all are derivable from this inexhaustible source of heavenly blessing. Reflecting and mirroring the plumage and countenances of "innumerable angels," where issuing from the Throne, it winds through Paradise, like a broad sheet of silver; thence flowing on down to its junction with the stream of time, reveals on its smooth surface the countenances of the "ancient worthies," gleaming like stars from the cerulean vault of the midnight heavens.

Unskilful as are some, who, fearful of trusting to its waves, tether themselves by alternate catchings

of the heart, to the shrubs of varied worldly beauty, those who resign their fragile bark to its placid current, feel that they are gently wafted by the odorous air of Paradise, which filling the light and airy sail, and moving it to and fro, makes it gleam above them, like moonbeams on the water. And then, perchance, should the season of trouble, of frequent storms arise, when the dip of the faith-oar sounds but faintly responsive to the stirring songs of promise and deliverance, when from one small cloud upon the blue sky the heavens become suddenly obscured, whilst the wind seizing upon the frail bark, tosses us like some fairy plaything upon the now foaming waters; and when, from the dread of the thunder's roll, and the lightning, as in sport, flashing and dancing across the angry heavens, we, dreading our skill, fall prostrate on the deck, invoking the aid of the God of the storm and winds, a boat, at that perilous moment, guided by one single Hand, will then be seen, sculling the waters toward our storm-riven vessel; when, springing "on board," we shall all realize, as we tremblingly cling to Him, with the cry—"Lord, save or we perish," that not a wave of onward-beating trouble shall ever engulf us.

When the Church, corrupted by tradition, had her light and power obscured, under the accumulative

rubbish of Rabbinical teachings, from this clear stream a supply of wisdom and salvation was opportunely derived, in the person of Him "in whom all fulness dwelt." 'Twas fresh and continual supplies from this stream, which, while enabling Apostles to combat successfully the opposition of men, and the incipient corruptions of the Church, threw out upon the surface, while winding amid the rubbish of centuries, such men as Huss, and Luther, and Calvin, and Zwingli; reformers of the Church, who, thrown up as pearls from the bed of the stream, are to the Christian dispensation what such men as Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah and Ezekiel were to the Old.

From it the *truth*, and the *men* to wield it, have been derived. From it not only comes the *promise* and the *hope* of pardon, but the wisdom and ability to apply them to the work of personal salvation. The taste of its waters producing conviction in the sinner, places hope in the heart of the penitent, and inspires the believer with gratitude and joy. The alternate source of healthful sorrow and joy, every successive draught of its more than "Pierian" waters imparts but the increased desire to partake of that everlasting Fountain, whence this broad stream doth ever flow.

Gladness, with all its peculiar characteristics, is

alone desirable from this river; which, while ever flowing, reflects on every ripple of its waves, the sunlight of celestial joys. Not those joys which, embedded in the unhealthy stream of human passion, produce but an effervescent and ephemeral pleasure; but, though exhilarating, are joys in which the understanding and conscience can participate. Then the assurance, while partaking of its current, that it will be in us “a well of water springing up into everlasting life,” imparts a relish for its crystal drops.

Like the murmur of Siloa, whilst inspiring a love for our sanctuary—our “city of God”—its onward flow falls with such loving, melting cadence, as leads us to exclaim—

“O that the world might taste and see
The riches of his grace!”

Teaching, preparing and comforting us, as onward we ascend to its inexhaustible Source, we may exclaim in joyful transport—

“Flow on, bright river! from thy source
Among the Highland founts afar;
And while rejoicing in thy course,
May morning sun, and evening star
Look down, and ever at thy side,
See life, and strength, and peace abide!”

THE GREAT SEA.

THE Jewish people, from necessity and inclination, were never destined to great maritime importance. Their comparatively small extent of navigable sea-coast, and their small lakes and rivers, were not adapted to commerce. They were, from their earliest history, a pastoral and agricultural people; and the country was happily adapted to their originally retired instincts and pursuits. The wealth of the Patriarchs was in flocks and herds; and their emerged trans-Egyptian history did not essentially change their original characteristics. The transshipment of the materials with which they assisted in the erection of the pyramids and obelisks, being confined to the sluices of the Nile, did not materially increase their nautical taste and skill. The specimens of Jewish ship-building were not at all equal to those of the Greeks and Romans, and no naval encounter ever occurred in their martial annals.

Other ancient nations soon became distinguished in the simpler arts of navigation; but it was not until the time of Solomon, that we have any account of any Jew becoming a voyager. Then we

read, that "ships" brought gold from Ophir, and that many other materials used in the construction of the Temple, were the benevolent gifts of Tyrian commerce.

This city was for many years the great seat and source of Asiatic trade, and in this feature of oriental grandeur more than surpassed its great rivals, Nineveh and Babylon. This great city, more than any other circumstance, identifies this continental sea with the history of the Jews. It was for a long time their only medium of communication with the bordering European nations, and is mentioned in their history, as far back as the "times" of Joshua. Josephus, however, fixes the date of the founding of this city not above two hundred and forty years before the building of the Temple of Solomon, which would be A. M. 2760, two hundred years after Joshua.

We understand (Josh. xix: 29,) that this city was allotted to the tribe of Asher, with the other maritime cities of the same coast. Homer never speaks of Tyre, but only of Sidon; and Isaiah calls Tyre the "daughter," or colony of Sidon. It appears that this city was two-fold—insular and continental. Insular Tyre was most ancient, for this it was that was noticed by Joshua. The continental city, how-

ever, being more commodiously situated, first grew into consideration, and assumed the name of Palætyrus, or Old Tyre. Insular Tyre was confined to a small rocky island, eight hundred paces long and four hundred broad, and could never exceed two miles in circumference. We learn from Pliny and Strabo, that Tyre on the opposite coast, about half a mile from the sea, was a city of vast extent; for, many centuries after its demolition by Nebuchadnezzar, the scattered ruins measured nineteen miles around.

Old Tyre withstood the mighty Assyrian power, having been besieged in vain, by Shalmaneser, for five years; although he cut off their supplies of water from the cisterns, which they remedied by digging wells within the city. It afterwards held out thirteen years against Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and was at length taken; but not until the Tyrians had removed their effects to the insular town, and left nothing but the bare walls for the victor to demolish. Alexander afterward made use of these materials to build a prodigious causeway or isthmus, above half a mile long, to the insular city, which revived, as the phoenix, from the ashes of the old city, and grew to great power and opulence as a maritime state; and which he stormed after a most obstinate siege of five months. Only eighteen years after

this terrible calamity, the city had so far recovered her ancient commerce and opulence, as enabled her to stand a siege of fourteen months, against Antigonus, before he could reduce the city. But after this Tyre fell alternately under the dominion of the kings of Syria and Egypt, and then of the Romans, until it was taken by the Saracens, about A. D. 639, re-taken by the Crusaders, A. D. 1124, and at length sacked and razed by the Mamelukes of Egypt, with Sidon and other strong towns, that they might no longer harbor the Christians, A. D. 1289. The final desolation of Tyre was thus foretold: "I will scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock; it shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God." "I will make her like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more, for I the Lord have spoken it, saith the Lord God."

Pococke observes, that "there are no signs of the ancient city, and as it is a sandy shore, the face of everything is altered, and the great aqueduct is in many places almost buried in the sand." Thus has been fulfilled the prophecy of Ezekiel—"Thou shalt be built no more, though thou be sought for, yet thou shalt never be found again." (Ezek. xxvi: 21.

The fate of insular Tyre has been no less remarkable. Maundrel, who visited the Holy Land A. D. 1697, describes it thus: "This city, standing in the sea, upon a peninsula, promises at a distance something very magnificent, but when you come to it, you find no similitude of that glory for which it was so renowned in ancient times, and which the prophet Ezekiel describes. On the north side it has an old Turkish ungarrisoned castle; beside which you see nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c. there being not so much as one entire house left! Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harboring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly by fishing; who seem to be preserved in this place by divine Providence, as a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, namely, that it should be as the top of a rock, a place for fishers to dry their nets upon." (Ezek. xxvi: 14.)

The Mediterranean sea was the great cradle of the world's commerce, and remained for ages the only test of the navigator's skill; and the wide area of water, on which was so often and so fearfully arbitrated the adverse interests of belligerent empires. Every well read school-boy is versed in the stirring and brilliant naval contests of the Pelopo-

nessian and Punic wars, and with the lives and the great achievements of Hannibal and Scipio; and how the respective fates of Rome and Thebes were sometimes suspended on the doubtful issue of a single battle. The contest was at last decided, and Rome became mistress of the world.

The little republics and states, within the small compass of the Grecian Archipelago, were oft-times distinguished for their naval prowess, sometimes contending for local supremacy, and then again for their undisputed position as masters of the surrounding nations. The Greeks were not less invincible than their Italian neighbors, and sometimes proved themselves more than a match for every opposing enemy.

It is not our object, however, to write in detail concerning these ancient wars, nor to repeat descriptions of the more modern and familiar, and probably not less brilliant battles of Navarino and the Nile. The nominal independence of Greece has been conjointly secured by the great European powers, and the oscillating splendors of Napoleon's destiny have been forever obscured in the princely mockery of his tragic fate. The opening events of the present century give promise that England will not sanction the probable irruptions of the Sultan and the Czar.

The Bible reader takes much greater interest in

other events, and in such scenes and voyages as marked the early history and progress of the Christian Church. This sea is honored as bearing Paul and Barnabas, the first missionary voyagers, who came down from Perga into Attalia; "and then sailed to Antioch." This great work entered early into the plans of the Apostles, and was one in which the Church was deeply interested.

Since that time many well tried servants of the Church have gone forth, from Europe and from our own country, traversing the same waters over which the Apostles sailed; and many more will yet go forth, to visit the same places, and to preach the same Gospel. St. Paul was the most distinguished, certainly the most devoted, and probably the most useful laborer of the early Church.

Who that has read his history can ever forget the records of his voyage to Rome, or the "affecting parting" with the brethren, when he went up to Jerusalem, all sorrowing, most of all that they should "see his face no more?" See him, in the early part of his ministry, disarming cavillers and conquering opposition. See him afterwards at Athens, that centre of wisdom and philosophic glory. See him on Mars' Hill, the central forum of the civilised world, with the wisest sages of the age, full of the bitterest

prejudices, for his hearers. See him subdue their haughtiness by his superior reasoning, and pour a flood of light upon their minds, which made converts of the mightiest foes. And, at a still later period, when manacled and unsupported by the presence of friends, he appeared in the courts of haughty princes—"a scoff, a jest, a by-word through the world;" when before Felix he defended himself, and before Agrippa delivered the most eloquent of his speeches, how mighty were the movings of reason in him, and how mighty were the effects his reasoning produced? It is not now possible to paint the great picture, which would furnish an adequate idea, in which he thus stood forth the most unrivalled orator of ancient or modern times. Combining in one great sermon the power and pathos for which all the most eminent modern preachers are separately distinguished. We may not simply speak of this effort as St. Paul's own defence; but rather that great apology and plea on which the after successes of the Apostles, and the fate of Christianity depended. Great men's acts have the one merit, of being the great moral centres on which revolve the events which ever make an indelibly good or bad impression.

This great sermon shows that the Apostle thought that Christianity, in its proper use, lay at the foun-

dation of all righteous law, government, science and religion. And what was belief in Paul's mind eighteen hundred years ago, is it not history now? Go back on the wing of thought, to the auspicious night when the Star of Bethlehem first shed its beams on the hills of Palestine, and thence soar from the Dead Sea westward, over Asia, Africa, and Europe, to the New World, and mark the rise, progress, and destruction of myriads of nations, down to the present hour; and tell me if the useful arts have not flourished, science advanced, and religion prospered—if good laws have not been perpetuated, and nations been happy, in proportion to their observance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The most illustrious galaxies of names and nations have clustered thickly through all time, on the shores of this large and inter-continental sea; and their future history may evolve such scenes to be enacted as have had no parallel in modern times. Every moral and physical evil has its antidote; and the storm, widespread and devastating, uprooted gigantic trees, which, floating on the surface of the once more tranquil ocean, suggested the means of transportation.

Navigation, in the mythology of the ancients ascribed to Venus and Minerva, owes its first invention to Ousous, the Phœnician, who, on the trunk of a

tree denuded of its branches, and half excavated by fire, boldly pushed from shore, and encountered the untried perils of the deep. Would we view the most beautiful object in nature, we will look to the ocean heaving and swelling in its mysterious undulation, its calm and placid surface checkered with light and shade, reflecting the sky above, and the changing aspect of the flying clouds! We could not pass by this "great sea," in writing sketches of the Streams and Fountains of the Holy Land.

THE IMMORTAL FOUNTAIN.

THE idea of vicarious offerings for sin seem omnipresent and co-eval with the history of almost all the existing tribes and nations of the earth. A few, indeed, may have no very clearly defined perceptions of its origin or import; but all attach to it the grand truth, of the substitution of the innocent for the guilty. It is this great truth which infidels would gladly gainsay; but which, showing the unity of our race, also beautifully illustrates many of the important facts and doctrines of the Bible. The physical evidences of the deluge are admitted to exist in the irruptions and fossil deposits observable in the mountain elevations of South America and Asia; but not less satisfactory is this other tradition of the general facts of the fall, and of the promises of final restoration. We maintain that these great traditions must have had some such origin as the Bible affords, together with the *manner* in which its great truths became disseminated, by the captivities and dispersions of his people. The existence of any great tradition is evidence that some truth existed, and is the shadow from which we can sometimes determine the character, the size and form of the intercepting ob-

ject. The "law," says St. Paul "was the shadow of good things to come," such things as have been gladly revealed in the fuller light of the Gospel day. To change the metaphor, it was the great mirror through whose transfused and obscured reflections the pious Jew might yet discover that good promised time of Gospel blessing. The great moral light of the Jewish dispensation resembles somewhat the indistinct images that tremble and glitter in a semi-summer day, amid the deep tangled wild-wood of the forest; or the flitting shadow of the summer cloud, as it rests serenely o'er the deep mountain gorge.

We must not think that the Jews were to be pitied for their lack of divine light. They had much more spiritual knowledge than all the cotemporary nations, and they were the only nation with whom God held actual communion. Other nations were left to their unsatisfying philosophic speculations, or to their uncertain and capricious oracles. When we compare the Jew with the Christian, in his conceptions and privileges, we know that the "least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he;" but when, also, we anticipate the future glory of the Church, in contrast with our own era, we know that the "light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be as the light of seven days." To know

the exact amount of light each era of the Church may have had, we must not only study its own history, but the dispensation and events which immediately succeeded. There is that light in the natural and moral world which makes darkness visible, and there is also that light which can pierce the thick gloom, and open up the cheering irradiations of the coming day. The Jews generally saw the great moral images of their system, much more through what was past, than what was yet to come; looking, from time to time, much more to Abraham than to Moses, and finally much more to Moses than to Christ. The Apostle said the "Jews required a sign, and the Greeks sought after wisdom;" but they were such signs as had had their fulfilment. All nations are in great danger of modeling their destiny by a servile and unmeaning attachment to obsolete institutions and customs, not studying the present, or faithfully looking forward to the probably pressing exigencies of the future.

It is the peculiar property of unbelief to profess an undue attachment to the past, ever magnifying or perverting the great truths which faith only can reveal. The Jews rejected Christ, on their own interpretation of the very promises he claimed support of his mission. "He came unto his *own*,

and his *own* received him not;" and none ever did receive him, under either dispensation of law or Gospel, but those whom faith empowered to become the "sons of God." There are some simple facts in Jewish history, which illustrate the manner in which their great religious blessings were received. When the "ark" rested in the house of Obed Edom, it was made the unconscious agent of innumerable mercies; and so was it when Rahab hid the spies, and the widow fed the prophet, or when the two disciples were accompanied by Jesus, and whose "hearts burned within them as he talked with them by the way."

It is no doubt true, that two persons with almost equal tastes and intellectual perceptions, in passing over a beautiful landscape, or in looking at some grand and picturesque mountain, would see objects quite differently, or, indeed, one might see what the other would entirely overlook. It is perhaps so in our spiritual perceptions; the one regaling himself by some hidden fountain of grace, or reclining in some delightful arbor, or basking in the invigorating sunshine, whilst another gropes his way amid darkness and tears. The great duty of Christian watchfulness applies equally to churches and individuals, and no doubt all pious people miss many precious seasons

of grace, by slumbering in the desert or in the garden, and by not heeding the enquiry, "What doest thou here, Elijah." While the "Bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept;" and the natural inference was, that whilst the soldiers slept, the disciples stole away the body of Jesus. It is a significant fact, that it was when Hagar had exhausted all the natural means of sustenance, and had abandoned her son, to retire deep amid the forest in penitence and prayer, that the mysterious angel appeared, and pointed out the bubbling fountain of the well Lahai-roi. God is near to him who is of a "broken and contrite spirit;" and it was to St. John, the meekest of all the Apostles, and not to Peter, that the Savior made known those great and grand truths which "must shortly be revealed." The Jews as a people were the unconscious recipients of unnumbered blessings, and many which did not come down through the ordinary means of offerings and ordinances. St. Paul, when speaking in contrast with the gentiles, of their great privileges, enumerates as chiefly among these, that to them was "committed the oracles of God." This was that "unconscious blessing," which, like the sun on their vine-clad hills, shed down upon all classes from all parts of the kingdom its mild and mellow lustre. It was to the whole nation of Canaan

what the divine presence was in the wilderness—"the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night." The whole order of Scribes and Priests was founded with the view to disseminate this knowledge, and to preach its great truths in the temple and their synagogues. Its influence was perceptible in all departments of society, it was the text-book of the learned, and the manual of the poor; the fount whence prophets drew their imagery and hallowed power, and whence patriot, poet, kings, drew their mild pathos, which tuned the melody of their plaintive lyres. We can trace, in the subsequent writings of each successive author, the influence each preceding book has had, and Christ sometimes announced his sublime truths in the glowing utterances of Ezekiel and Isaiah.

Jesus Christ was the great central luminary of each revolving dispensation. He is the great original in the great pictures and images of the Bible, and the great unknown, to whom all the prophets gave heed. He flames with undimmed lustre in the burning bush, engirts himself with lightnings on Sinai, and stands in mysterious grandeur on the sloping environs of Jericho, as the mysterious angel, "with a sword drawn in his hand." The Jews well knew that their great sacrifices were typical. One sacrifice had not yet been made. God had furnished

an unexpected offering to Abraham, and the anti-type had not yet been furnished. They could all say, in their mysterious searches, and when reading the prophets, "of whom doth this man speak?" There was an unknown explanation of all their great services. The High Priest was not "He" of whom Moses spake. Sometimes they caught a glimpse of the on-coming glory, breathed the glad promise and died. It was seen by Moses, in the filmy vision of the Nebo-prospect of the promised land, or in the wild deserts where unknown streams rippled sweetly, amid the uprising verdure of expanding plains. Says the prophet, "In that day there shall be a *fountain* opened in the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."

It was this great fact, that man is a sinner, which lies at the source of all the great remedial efforts of the Gospel, and which gives such practical value to the death of Christ. The "Fountain in Siloam" did not possess any vital interest but to the impotent and diseased; and it was the great truth, that it had healed diseases, which induced the "poor man" to be thirty-eight years in the porch of the pool of Bethesda. The same truths give equal efficacy and power to the cross, and constrains each true penitent and believer gratefully to exclaim—

“E’er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.”

With these views all the great types and symbols of the law have peculiar significance and meaning, from the great annual sacrifice, whose blood sprinkled the garments of the High Priest, to the meek, votive offering of turtle doves or two young pigeons. In contemplating the whole wonderful system of the Jews, we discover the great intention of Christ’s sacrifice interwoven, not only into the verbal prophecies and extraordinary events of their history, but into the ordinary transactions of the lives of selected individuals; and hence Adam was “the figure of him that was to come,” (Rom. v: 14:) and Melchisedek was “made like unto the Son of God. (Heb. vii: 3.)

Some of these types afford intrinsic evidence that the Scriptures which record them are given by inspiration of God; the others can be proved to exist only by assuming that fact; but all, when once established, display the astonishing power and wisdom of God, and the importance of that scheme of redemption which was ushered into the world with such magnificent preparations. The great fact of Christ’s vicarious offering, is the doctrinal test of a rising or falling Church. For, if we preach that he

did not die, and is risen again, our "faith is vain and we are yet in our sins." In view of this fact, it may be truly said to every one, and to the whole host of the Christian Israel collectively—

"Here streams of sacred pleasure rise,
To ease our every pain;
Immortal Fountain, full supplies,
Nor shall we thirst in vain."

The great truths of redemption take strong hold of the affections and the imagination, and taking into account our somewhat obscured perceptions of moral purity and beauty, rests upon the soul as a "refiner and purifier of silver." In full view of Calvary, the world's fine golden pleasures become valueless, impalpable dross; whilst the redeemed spirit rises up from the realization of its blessings, counting all things but loss for the "excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord."

This last sketch forms, with the description of the "River of Life," the second special illustration of the blessings of salvation, and is an humble attempt to make vitally real the great doctrines of the cross. We close our sketches, ardently hoping that these "Fountains" may one day ripple freshly up before us, on the plains of the brighter and heavenly Canaan.





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